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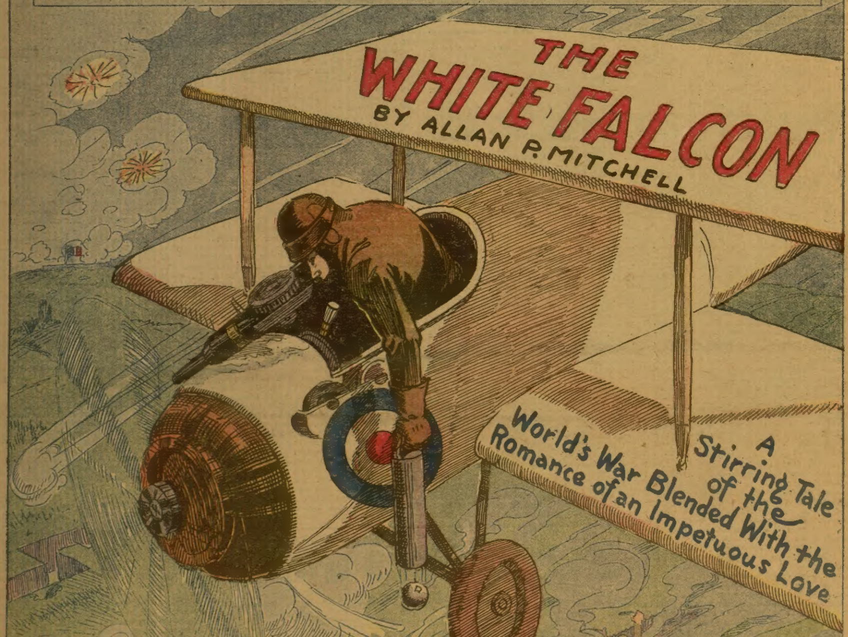
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BY ALLAN P. MITCHELL
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CHICAGO LEDGER

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What is Your Problem?

CONDUCTED FOR THE LEDGER
by VICTORIA GREY

I SEE you are so kind as to answer questions for others. Will you help me? Can you tell me a few of the symptoms of insanity? The person in question is a man. He leaves home three to five times a year, gets on a train and no one knows where he goes. He accuses others of things he has done himself. He lives in a constant state of fighting with his family and others, too. There is evidence that he has committed murder once, but the thing was kept from court, and he has tried to commit murder several times. He had his skull crushed in when he was 9 years old. It burst and grew a ridge almost an inch high in one place, and in another there is a hole about two and one-half inches long, just an inch over the temple. What do you think of the case? X. Y. Z.

Anything that irritates the nerves and the big nerve center—which is the brain—sufficiently will cause erratic actions known as insanity. There are diseases which attack the nerves and the different kinds cause different kinds of insanity. Great worry will weaken the nervous system and make it more susceptible to diseases. A poor nervous system by inheritance very often results in insanity. An injury such as this man has had could cause scar tissue on the brain and cause insanity. Of course, a man can commit murder and yet be sane—so the doctors say. Insane asylums are now generally known as "State Hospitals," and this man can be sent, free of charge, to be looked over. If he is insane they will keep him there for the rest of his life or until he is cured. They give wonderful care and treatment, and have large enough places to be able to have all the equipment for taking exercise, hydrotherapeutic—or curative—baths. All one has to do is to write to your nearest State Hospital for information.

Dear Miss Grey: I want to spend an athletic summer. I am a girl 19 years old and am going to college next fall—am graduating from high school this spring. People keep telling me I have such sparkle in my eyes and such a glowing skin that I must be an athletic girl, and I am sorry to say I am not at all. But I must live up to my reputation, don't you know, so would you tell me which would give me more of a "rep," tennis or golf, and I will buy whatever outfit you suggest. There are wonderful courses and also wonderful tennis courts hereabouts.

Yours for living up to your reputation. MISNAMED.

If you have an overabundance of joyous spirits, tennis will be more of a joy to you than golf. One can jump into the air and trip about in a perfect passion of exercise and outdoors and blue sky and swimming white clouds and all, and what is more, tennis gives far more exercise than golf. For, the average eighteen-hole golf course is something like three miles long. To play around a course like this takes from two to three hours. That is less than a mile an hour. This is just ambling and is no real exercise at all. This makes golf look like an invalids' game, made for people who cannot stand more strenuous sports, or who are too fat for them.

A skilled golfer will have a score of less than ninety strokes in the round of the course while a poorer player will have a hundred or more. Taking a hundred as average, we find that swinging a club a hundred times in three hours means a stroke every hundred or two seconds, while in vigorous swimming, the strokes come oftener than every second.

It is a wonderful game for muscle control and muscle judgment, however, and it is very absorbingly interesting—but after all, that is in the province of the mind more than a more active game, such as tennis.

Dear Miss Grey: I am writing to you about the hives. I have them so badly I cannot rest night or day and the doctors say they cannot do anything for me. Will you please give me some of your advice? DAISY.

Hives are often a matter of diet. I myself got a terrible case of them two winters ago from eating raspberry marmalade and living in dry rooms. After a hanging radiator pan was filled with water and affixed to the back of the living-room radiator and I stopped eating raspberry dishes I recovered. Neglecting either one of these things brought on the hives that winter. Buckwheat pancakes, strawberries, eggs and cake often result in hives in different individuals. Having dandruff or a cat will cause hives in many people on account of inhaling the invisible fur or dandruff scales.

Whichever of these things apply to you you would be well attended to.

Dear Miss Grey: How old should a girl be before she has her first date? How early should he come? How late should a gentleman stay when he calls on a lady? If the girl thinks he is staying too late, what should she say to dismiss him? What is the correct time for a party? What is the correct thing to say when you are introduced to people? When you introduce people? When you introduce a person to a roomful of people, is it correct to introduce him to each one separately, or to the crowd as a whole? When a young man is introduced to a lady should he be the first to hold out his hand, or should she, or is it necessary at all? If a man and two women are walking along the street, what side should he walk on and should he take hold of their arms? If France had been able to complete the Panama Canal, would it not have resulted in a war between France and the United States on account of the Monroe Doctrine?

To use the word "date" in this sense is supposed to be unrefined. Eighteen is about the age for the first evening engagement, but little boys and girls may go to the art institute or museum of natural sciences or something like that of an afternoon together and it is all right.

He may come about 8 o'clock and stay until 11. It is in good form for a girl to tell a man he is staying too late if he stays after 11. A party for the evening begins at 8 or 9 o'clock. When introduced, say simply, "How do you do." If the gentleman says, "I am pleased to meet you," say "thank you." In introducing, you can do it simply by merely mentioning the names. Never introduce a person to a roomful, but introduce the roomful to the person. If you just mention the names, the inflection of your voice must imply you are introducing people TO the newly-arrived. Introduce each one separately. It is not necessary to take hands, but it's awfully nice and personal and the young man should extend his hand first unless the young lady is the hostess, in which case, she has the option of offering her hand. In walking, the gentleman does not hold the arm except in going up or down steps or bumps. Opinion is divided as to whether he should walk nearest the curb or between the two women.

France's completion of the Panama Canal would not necessarily have resulted in war.

The Kid Gets a Job

Emil A. Gocker

BIG BILL McGUIRE'S heavy shoulders were bent over the old desk in the dingy office from which Big Bill had run "the plant" for fifteen years. He was struggling with a sheet of paper literally covered with formidable figures. He started up a column of these figures, checking each with his pencil. Half way up the column, he stopped, tossed the pencil on the desk, leaned back in his chair in disgust and, probably, would have given vent to his feelings if he had not been surprised by the presence of a young lad standing, cap in hand, a few feet from the desk.

With a quick glance he swept the boyish figure from heel to crown. The polished shoes, the carefully pressed trousers, the clean linen, the boyish face—McGuire, who seldom gave any one or anything a second glance, rendered this homage to the face quite involuntarily. It was plentifully besprinkled with freckles, it was decorated with a smile that reached from ear to ear below two eyes of clear blue which looked out from beneath a thatch of reddish-brown hair.

McGuire was in a bad humor. Bad humors were chronic with Big Bill. He was known as a "hard man" and a driving boss. There were those who said that he was not human, that his love was money and his heart as hard as the steel.

As McGuire looked at the boy the grin on that freckled face widened and for some reason the gruff command for the kid to clear out got no farther than McGuire's thoughts.

"Well?" he said sharply.

The smile widened and the blue eyes twinkled as, in a pleasant voice, the kid asked:

"Is there any chance for me to get a job?"

The big boss snorted contemptuously, and, while he wondered why he didn't order the kid out of the place, he said:

"A job! For you? Why, you're only a kid!"

"I know it," the kid replied without reducing the dimensions of his grin, "but can't you use me somewhere?"

"No! We want men in this plant," the boss remarked, and felt that his sarcasm was impotent before that grin. He picked up his pencil, bent his shoulders over the desk again, and prepared to resume his struggle with the figures on the paper.

"Won't you give me a chance, just one chance, and if I don't fit in——?"

The big boss straightened up, determined to make short shift with this persistent infant, but again he encountered that grin!

"What can you do?" he asked.

"Why, most anything, if I try. I can do figures like those you are working on!"

"Oh, you can, can you? Well, you can't! I'm the only man in this plant that can do this sort of work. There's nothing but work in this plant, muscle-grinding, and nothing for an inexperienced kid like you. There's nothing here but work."

"And work's what I'm asking for," grinned the kid.

"Come on. It's just a waste of time fooling with you. You'll get what you're looking for—work!"

The big boss led the way thru a maze of dark buildings where supplies of all kinds were stored. Core boxes, building tools, patterns, castings and heavy machinery everywhere added to the confusion. Dusk and dust made the place uncanny The kid followed closely on the heels of the big boss as they passed thru the mixing-room. In the adjoining core-room the boss stopped and the kid's heart missed a beat as he gasped in astonishment and some terror at what he saw about him.

In the dim glare of dusty electric lights an immense giant oven loomed its bulk directly in front of him. It was flanked by smaller ovens. A number of shelves were being withdrawn from the ovens and the baked cores on them gave off a dense, vaporous smoke that filled the room, making objects shadowy and indistinct.

Busily engaged in removing the plates of cores with their iron tongs, sweat-drenched and dirt-begrimed men wearily glanced at the boss and the kid. Others, the core-makers, passed significant smiles, winked at each other, and went on with their work. There was no love for this boss. No one spoke to him unless he spoke first. The boss looked over the scene and a hard smile appeared on his face. It was the smile of the driving master who views with some satisfaction the work of his hirelings. He went to the second oven and began to instruct the kid in the work of piling cores. Finally he said:

"Suppose you'll start in tomorrow?"

"No, right now—today," the kid grinned.

"In those clothes?"

Another grin and a head nodding an affirmative.

"What's your name?"

"Brenton. Jimmy Brenton. Back home, tho, they call me most any old name and I stand for it." Again that smile!

"You'll have to take it here. They'll call you anything and everything under the sun, and they'll get away with it," said the boss bitterly. "While I'm at it, let me give you some advice, which probably will be wasted. Take it or let it alone, but I'm putting you right! Don't let your mouth run away with you. You've got to stand the gaff here! This is no place for a yellow streak. Keep your mouth shut and your eyes open and watch out for yourself. You've asked for work and now you've got it. This (the big boss waved his hand toward the smoke-swept foundry—is a place of blood and fire and iron, and it's every one for himself!"

"Thanks!" grinned the kid, and for some inexplicable reason the big boss turned on his heel and strode away in the smoke and grime without looking back.

Back at the desk in the office McGuire started in on the figures again, and again stopped half way up the first column because he discovered that the sum of his figures was a freckled, grinning, boyish face.

Bill McGuire was a hard man; a two-fisted fighting man, who had bulled his way thru competition and ruthlessly and coldly paid the price for success. There were those who said he was miserly, those who insisted he was soulless, those who knew from experience that none of the finer sentiments was permitted to soften his business methods or his labor policy. There were times when he was positively cruel. It was as if the white-hot metal from his own furnaces had flowed in and seared his soul and left him something of a human cinder without the warmth of love or compassion. He was 40 years old. If he had a love in the world it was his "plant," a thing of hissing, molten iron, of steel-edged machines. No one who knew him would suspect that he might add a row of figures and get the sum in a freckled, grinning, boyish face.

But that kid's face began to haunt him. At first he was sure that it was the grin on the face which impressed him. Grin or freckles, whether he was adding figures or walking thru the plant, or looking over the monthly trial balance, the kid's face always was appearing and invariably Big Bill, the hard boss, would contemplate it with a strange softening of feelings. He found himself wandering aimlessly about the plant and always ending up near the core ovens to take a surreptitious look at the kid. Big Bill would, of course, not admit it, even to himself, but the plant had become something more than hot iron and cold steel. Something human had come into it.

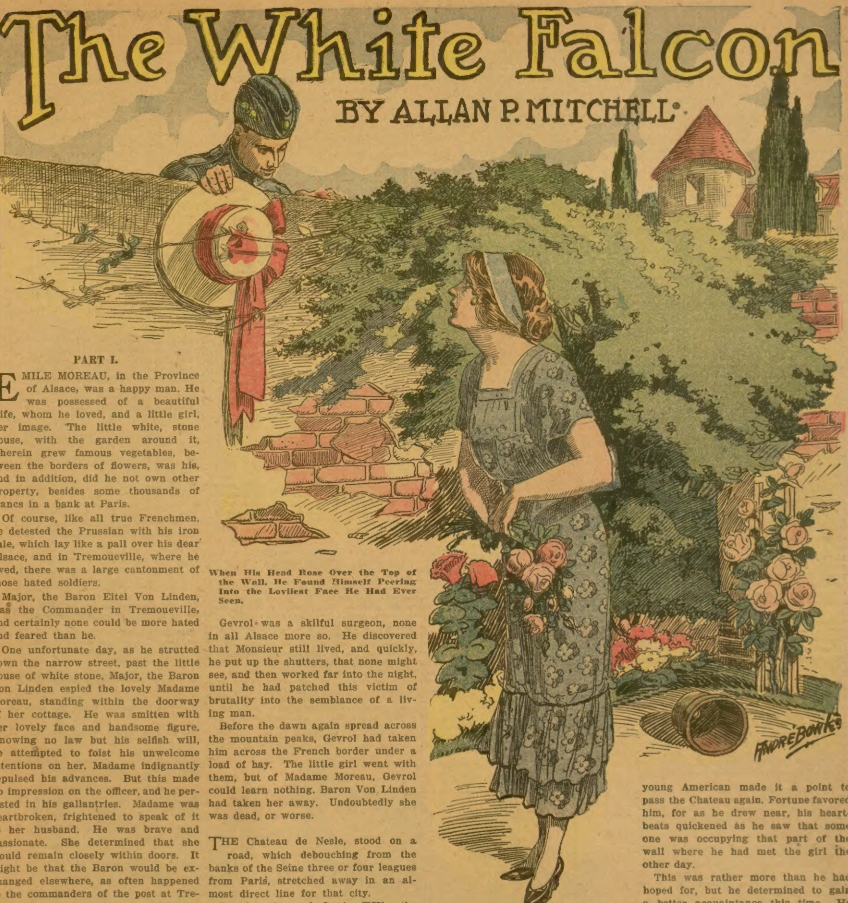
As for the kid, he found that he had been given what he had asked for—work. It was hard work. At first the hard men in the gang were intent on running him out. The kid was different; he didn't belong in the gang. They'd make it tough for him, and he'd quit. They began to work him and he grinned. They began to throw the gaff into him and he grinned. Some of them called him hard names, and he grinned.

Then the time came when even the gang could see that the boss was watching the kid. Every morning he would appear in the oven-room. Sometimes he would speak to the kid; at other times he would look at him for a minute and pass on. The gang did not make things easier for the kid because of

Continued on Page 12.)

The White Falcon

BY ALLAN P. MITCHELL



When His Head Rose Over the Top of the Wall. He Found Himself Peering Into the Lovliest Face He Had Ever Seen.

PART I.

EMILE MOREAU, in the Province of Alsace, was a happy man. He was possessed of a beautiful wife, whom he loved, and a little girl, her image. The little white, stone house, with the garden around it, wherein grew famous vegetables, between the borders of flowers, was his, and in addition, did he not own other property, besides some thousands of francs in a bank at Paris.

Of course, like all true Frenchmen, he detested the Prussian with his iron rule, which lay like a pall over his dear Alsace, and in Tremoueville, where he lived, there was a large cantonment of those hated soldiers.

Major, the Baron Eitel Von Linden, was the Commander in Tremoueville, and certainly none could be more hated and feared than he.

One unfortunate day, as he strutted down the narrow street, past the little house of white stone, Major, the Baron Von Linden espied the lovely Madame Moreau, standing within the doorway of her cottage. He was smitten with her lovely face and handsome figure. Knowing no law but his selfish will, he attempted to foist his unwelcome attentions on her. Madame indignantly repulsed his advances. But this made no impression on the officer, and he persisted in his gallantries. Madame was heartbroken, frightened to speak of it to her husband. He was brave and passionate. She determined that she would remain closely within doors. It might be that the Baron would be exchanged elsewhere, as often happened to the commanders of the post at Tremoueville.

One afternoon sometime after this occurrence, after the drill hour, when he had partaken of an unusual quantity of wine, the Baron Von Linden, paused in his promenade and pushed open the door of Monsieur Moreau, and entered. Madame was busy with her household duties and did not see, until he had seized her in his huge arms. Her affrighted cries brought Monsieur Moreau from his shop at the rear of the cottage. Thoroly enraged at the scene before him, Monsieur struck the officer in the face. The blow staggered the Prussian and caused him to let go of Madame Moreau, but it was to be the undoing of her husband. For the Baron called lustily for help, and the soldiers, who ever loitered in the streets of Tremoueville heard, and they came hastily and in numbers. Monsieur Moreau was knocked senseless and thrust thru and thru again with bayonets.

Thus it was, that later, his friend Gevrol found him lying in a pool of blood.

Gevrol was a skilful surgeon, none in all Alsace more so. He discovered that Monsieur still lived, and quickly, he put up the shutters, that none might see, and then worked far into the night, until he had patched this victim of brutality into the semblance of a living man.

Before the dawn again spread across the mountain peaks, Gevrol had taken him across the French border under a load of hay. The little girl went with them, but of Madame Moreau, Gevrol could learn nothing. Baron Von Linden had taken her away. Undoubtedly she was dead, or worse.

THE Chateau de Nesle, stood on a road, which debouching from the banks of the Seine three or four leagues from Paris, stretched away in an almost direct line for that city.

In the time of Louis XIV., the Chateau had been an imposing landmark, surrounded by high, strong walls and a deep and wide moat. But the revolution had to a great extent levelled the one, and time had almost effaced the other. The Chateau itself had been partially dismantled and rebuilt on a much smaller scale.

Robert Allison, American, soldier of fortune, an aviator in the Lafayette Esquadrille, but recently wounded, and more recently turned out of the hospital, often passed the Chateau de Nesle, in his rambles while convalescing, without having any great degree of interest awakened in the venerable pile. In the past few months he had seen too many hoary Chateaus and aged castles.

One day in June, as he approached the Chateau an unexpected flash of color on the wall attracted his attention, and his curiosity increased as something red and white fluttered down the side of the moss covered stones and disappeared into the depression of the moat.

He leaped down the shallow embankment, and recovered a woman's hat, of white straw draped with a red ribbon. Looking upward he could see no one, but he saw that it would be easy to climb the rough surface of the stones, and he began the ascent. When his head rose over the top of the wall, he found himself peering into the loveliest face he had ever seen. So startled was he that he very nearly let go of the wall for a tumble to the bottom of the old moat.

The girl, for she was young, was even more confused, and could scarcely control her fears to thank him, and then, before he could speak, she sprang down the steps leading from the top of the wall to the garden walk, and ran hastily toward the Chateau.

As soon as he could recover from his astonishment at the girl's surprising beauty, and wondering at her hasty flight, Allison sprang down to continue his journey.

The next two or three days were rainy, but on the next fair one, the young American made it a point to pass the Chateau again. Fortune favored him, for as he drew near, his heartbeats quickened as he saw that some one was occupying that part of the wall where he had met the girl the other day.

This was rather more than he had hoped for, but he determined to gain a better acquaintance this time. He lost no time in climbing to her height. This time she did not flee as before, but looked at him timidly, with a quick fearful glance toward the Chateau, as if she suspected some one might see.

His frank greeting dispelled her embarrassment almost at once and she accepted his cheerful camaradie. Her name, he learned was Yvonne, only child of Monsieur Emile Moreau. She had just returned home from a convent, to find an even stricter monitor in Minnette, that despot of a French home, an old and valued servant. From this date, Allison and Yvonne had almost daily trysts on the old wall, and at times even defied the sharp eyes of old Minnette to walk about the garden together. They became great friends, nay we fear that we are about to dodge facts, even if the two young people did not yet realize that they were becoming more and more enamoured of each other. They thought, foolish youth, that they had escaped the shrewd eyes of Minnette.

In a room on the lower floor of the

Chateau de Nesle, a solitary occupant was seated, at a long green covered table, minutely examining some small metal globes of perhaps half an inch in diameter. These glistened like silver or some alloy of tin, and the man gloated over them as he passed them from one hand to the other, or rolled them carefully about on the table.

The room was fitted up as a laboratory, as was evidenced by the array of bottles, glass retorts, porcelain mortars and copper tubes of various sizes and lengths, and there was a small brazier smoking at one side of his chair.

The lone occupant of this room in the Chateau de Nesle was a man of indeterminate age, and he was confined to a wheeled chair; it was plain that he was a cripple.

His face was that of a strong man, tho the mass of hair covering the well-shaped head was as white as the driven snow; beneath glowed a pair of bright, somber eyes that at least were young.

For fifteen years Emile Moreau had been confined to his chair a hopeless paralytic, victim of injuries inflicted by the Prussians in Alsace.

For fifteen years he had brooded and plotted against the day when he would be able to pay the author of his injuries with the interest many times compounded. And not his enemies only, but his country's as well.

The years had passed slowly, and they had been thickly strewn with disappointments. He had made many failures of experiments in this room, but the bitterness held within the slender frame had furnished always the requisite motive power to drive him on and yet on towards that day when the work of his hands would wound the Prussian nation grievously.

Since the day when the invaders had been hurled back from the Marne, Moreau had redoubled his efforts among his death-dealing implements, and now, he smiles as he realizes that his efforts have not been in vain, and nothing is lacking but the actual test. Perhaps, fearfully harassed Verdun will yet be saved to France!

He touches a button in the arm of his chair, and almost immediately a door to the right of him opens, to admit a man, a man with iron gray hair and pointed beard. This individual is evidently in high humor, for he smiles and rubs his hands together, and moves alertly.

"Ah! M. Gevrol, something has happened!" M. Moreau exclaimed.

"Yes, it is true," the other replies, "My friend, congratulate me, I have succeeded, the White Falcon is complete. Ah, mon comrade, it is wonderful, magnificique!"

The two men shook hands joyously.

When they had quieted somewhat from their transports, Monsieur Moreau, cried triumphantly, "Those Prussians! now we shall see, but tell me about it!"

"It is all finished. With white wings spread, the engine, which, I, Gevrol, have made will carry the White Falcon more than a hundred leagues the hour. It only awaits a cargo of your bombs, Monsieur, to kill these enemies, one thousand, ten, one hundred thousand!"

M. Moreau's face clouded for a moment.

"There is one thing lacking, my friend," he said, "Who shall fly with this White Falcon!"

The other threw up his hands in sudden consternation.

"Alas!" he answered, "we have overlooked an important matter, and we are not young, and a young man is necessary. What shall we do?"

M. Moreau suddenly touched another button, and waited.

"Minnette," he said, when a broad-faced French woman answered his summons, "tell Mlle. Yvonne to come hither."

In a few moments the young girl came in hastily, carrying in her hand a basket of flowers, freshly plucked from the garden. With her cheeks flushed from her hurried entry, she appeared very lovely. She crossed the room and placed her arms about her father's neck.

"What is it, mon pere?"

M. Moreau ran his fingers lightly thru the light brown hair in a caressing touch, then——

"When will you see Monsieur, the Americaine, again?"

A wave of color suffused the cheeks of the girl.

"The Americaine! why what can you mean, papa?" she asked in a low tone.

"Tut, tut," her father replied, with a faint smile, "think you that Minnette's eyes grow dim? I should have long since put a stop to certain meetings on the garden wall, had I not needed this young man. But come, you have not answered me."

Yvonne leaned down until her hot cheeks rested on her father's head——

"He promised to come this afternoon."

"Then send him here, I would see him." As she left the room, he turned to M. Gevrol.

"It is most fortunate. This is the very man we require. Monsieur Joffre recommends him. He is said to be without an equal as a flier, and has already brought down seven of the enemy planes."

IT WAS late in the afternoon that the door opened, and Robert Allison was ushered into the presence of the two inventors. They gave each other an appreciative glance, when the young American stood before them. Few finer specimens of youthful strength and intelligence existed than this Robert Allison. He was scarcely more than five feet ten, and slenderly built, but his shoulders were broad and he was light in his movements. A pair of dark gray eyes flashed bold quick glances about the room. M. Moreau spoke first.

"Be seated, Monsieur Allison, I have sent for you to make a proposal, that will, no doubt, surprise you. Unusual it may appear, it is one which I hope that you can accept."

He paused a moment, as if to gather his thoughts, or it may be to note the effect of his words. The American merely bowed, and waited. M. Moreau began again in a low tense tone:

"It is many years since I received from Prussians, fearful injuries, which left me the cripple which you see before you, Monsieur Allison, and since that day, I have used every faculty I possessed in seeking revenge. M. Gevrol, has shared these thoughts and this great purpose with me. A war between France and Germany has always been inevitable, and for that reason our energies have been put into the creation of something that would be a factor in destroying our enemies. M. Gevrol and I have worked along different lines, and both have succeeded. The war has indeed arrived, and with it our opportunity."

Moreau picked up a handful of little globes and held them that Allison might see:

"These are filled with a gas so powerful that one alone will destroy an entire company of soldiers. You see there is no fuse, but they will burst upon contact with the earth, and may even dissolve in their descent under some conditions, the friction from dropping from a high altitude for instance. But they are perfectly harmless in ordinary handling. Not only will human beings be destroyed, but everything—animal or vegetable—within a considerable radius of the explosion will cease to be. The gun for firing them, you will see over in that corner, a very simple affair.

"These," he continued, picking up a couple of glass discs and placing them in a metal frame, which had a handle for manipulating it, "are other very dangerous implements, but only in conjunction with the sun. These discs, you will note are much like exagerated sun glasses, and in fact that is what they are, only more powerful than anything of the kind in existence. It is intended for desttroying munition dumps, and the men as well on bright days, and is the one engine of destruction that will not run out of ammunition, except in so far as it must depend on the weather. And last but, perhaps most important, M. Gevrol has constructed an airplane, more powerful and infinitely swifter than anything which the enemy will have. I am sure, M. Allison, that the world will be amazed when this complete ensemble shall have been turned loose on its career."

M. Moreau paused slightly, then his burning eyes scanned Allison's face, "M. Allison, you can doubtless guess, what is the proposal of which I spoke. M. Gevrol and I are growing old, you are a skilful flier."

Allison had listened with rapidly increasing interest to M. Moreau's recital, but with some doubt as to the entire sanity of the shrunken gray-haired figure before him. Finally he asked:

"May I see this machine of M. Gevrol?"

"Certainly, Monsieur. M. Gevrol will accompany you."

In a large enclosed shed at the extreme end of the garden, Allison saw it. He was astonished at the beauty and evident strength, yet withal so apparently fragile, and graceful in its outlines. It was a great birdlike flier, with extremely small engine of a design new to him, and a tremendous sweep of planes. It was a sight to warm the heart of any birdman. Covered with glistening white enamel save for the tricolor on the tail, it appeared luminous even in the dusk of the shadowy shed. Allison's mind was made up. He was all impatience to try it.

When they had returned to the Chateau, the American no longer hesitated with the proposal. He had seen the machine, he was no longer a skeptic of the explosives.

"Explain your bombs and discs fully," he said to M. Moreau. "I am with you in this great adventure, the enemy shall learn to fear the 'White Falcon.'"

As the three men seated themselves about the table, all were in high feather, but their anticipations were to be of short duration, for they were suddenly interrupted by a shrill scream from the direction of garden, and a moment later, Minnette burst into the room, crying, "She's gone, Mlle. is gone!"

Allison and M. Gevrol sprang to their feet in alarm. M. Moreau fell back in his chair.

"Gone!" he exclaimed, "Gone, where?"

Minnette paused from the futile wringing of her hands, and held out a piece of paper. The American seized it, and with a glance saw that it was covered with writing in French, he gave it to M. Moreau. He read it aloud:

> **"Monsieur—Your daughter for your flying machine. If you accept, mark in large letters on the east wall YES. Don't delay, if not there when the sun rises the second morning from this, your daughter will be lost. APACHE.**

The faces of the men went white as they gazed at each other.

THERE are, in the city of Paris, many houses that assume an air of respectability they do not deserve, and some of them would receive visits from the police with greater or less frequency, were they not in reality so successfully camouflaged with demure fronts.

That one in the Rue Nicolo Number 13 was in appearance a respectable cafe. But had a gendarme happened along after nightfall, he would no doubt have become suspicious at the number of men, of various types who passed in, and the few who apparently came out.

We must follow one individual who ran hastily up the three steps leading from the pavement. The man was fair-haired, blue-eyed and had florid cheeks, which made him somewhat noticeable as he crossed the floor of the cafe, and entered another room at the back.

When he had closed the door behind him, he confronted an occupant of this apartment. This second person sat behind a flat-topped desk writing in strange cipher on sheets of transparent paper. As the other entered, he covered them with his arm, but evidently recognizing his visitor, turned in his chair to face him.

"Well, Adolph, what luck?"

"The worst possible. The shed is watched night and day, so that it is impossible to approach it. Doubtless since I was dismissed by M. Gevrol, they suspect that an attempt will be made to capture the machine."

"Did you arrange for men whom you can trust, to attack underground?"

"They will be put to work tonight, as soon as all fear of interruption is over. However, it will be an onerous job, and will take some days to complete, increasing the danger that the machine may be put into commission before we can reach it."

"I assume, that you have no report of any airman having arrived to man it?"

"No one, unless it should be the stranger who has been seen talking to Mademoiselle over the wall during the past week or so, no doubt it is merely some lover of hers."

The two men sat for some moments in gloomy silence, their faces expressing poignant disappointment at the miscarriage of some plan of theirs.

They were aroused from their thoughts by the opening of the door again. This time it was to admit a woman, tall and finely formed, and blond like the first comer. She came forward with the movement of a great cat.

"Messiers, you look with gloomy brows," she said as she sank into a chair near them. "Has M. Pitou placed you under his protecting surveillance?"

Both men started and scowled at the mention of that name, while the woman laughed amusedly.

"La, la, to think that the mere name of M. Pitou should frighten Mon Chere Colonel and you, Otto."

The man behind the desk threw up his hand in alarm.

"Stop," he exclaimed, "it is dangerous, this using of our names."

The woman became serious at once.

"What then, may I ask, is troubling you gentlemen?"

The one whom she had called Colonel leaned forward and began to speak in lower tones. When he had finished, she looked at him thoughtfully.

"Why not make M. Moreau furnish a hostage, in his daughter. He no doubt loves her."

Otto grinned. "Excellent Mlle., easy to make him do that!" he said sarcastically.

The woman lowered her voice to a whisper. The two men listened with growing surprise on their faces, and nodded affirmatively. When she had finished, the woman rose and prepared to depart. At the door, she stopped.

"Tomorrow at 4. We will return thru the porte Versailles and straight here."

The men bowed in acquiescence.

M. MOREAU was the first to recover from the surprise of the startling and unexpected denouement.

"Nom de Dieu!" he shouted as he straightened up in his chair, and leaned forward menacingly, his white hair appearing to quiver with his rage, "What has become of Yvonne and how?"

He shot the questions at the frightened woman with such vehemence, that she stopped the tragic wringing of her hands.

"Mademoiselle wished for some flowers which she saw in the wood beyond the garden walls, and called me to accompany her. We went some distance. We came into the road half a league from here. As we reached the road an automobile dashed from the trees a little way from where we had stopped. When opposite to us two men alighted, and one approached and asked if it was Mlle. Moreau, and then before she could reply, the other had approached and threw a wrap over her head, and ran with her toward the car. I sprang after her, but the man who had first spoken, caught and thrust me back, placing in my hand at the same time the paper. Then, he, too, ran after the automobile, calling out over his shoulder, 'Give that paper to your master and tell him to beware of the answer he gives.'"

Having said all of this rapidly, Minnette broke down again and began to sob and wring her hands.

"The one who spoke, what was he like?" asked M. Gevrol.

"Tall, with lightish hair and pink face, clean-shaven," was the reply, then she added with some confusion, "I was so frightened, it may be I am wrong, and he was more dark than light."

Gevrol smiled as if he had expected the answer.

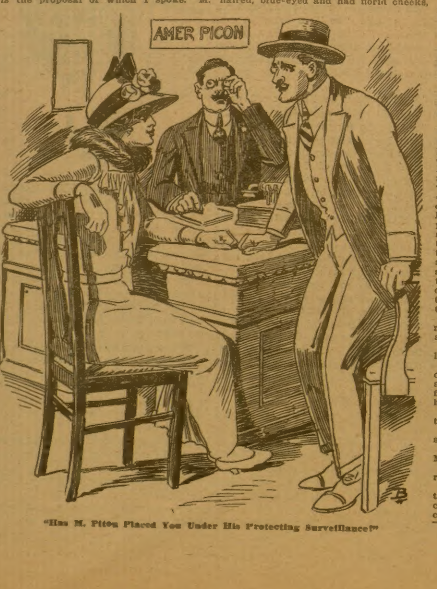
"It is Leque, without a doubt, he said simply.

M. Moreau started, "And who is Leque, Monsieur?"

M. Gevrol hesitated a moment before replying.

"My friend," he then said, "Leque is that young man I had to assist me in constructing the machine. One day I caught him making copies of the plans

(Continued on Page 16.)



"Has M. Pitou Placed You Under His Protecting Surveillance?"

HOOK, LINE and SINKER

by HOWARD PHILIPS RHOADES

ONCE more Perry Gates impatiently paced the broad porch of the Castleton Hotel while he watched the approach of the little steamer which was the hotel's chief means of communication with the outside world. This was the noon boat and Gates, all morning—as often before—was hoping it might bring somebody, something, to break the monotony which had grown almost unbearable.

"Come, dad," he said presently to a large man reading nearby, whose asthma was the chief reason for their presence at this resort, tucked very close to the northernmost border of the Great Lakes. "Come. She's passing Otter Island."

The broad-shouldered young college man, with his decisively-set chin and his clear blue eyes, had not lost patience in the region around the Castleton Hotel because of its nature, for it was a paradise of piney islands, rippling waters and blue skies. But when one has just turned one's majority, and finds one's greatest pleasure in swift exciting action, fishing, golf and porch visiting fall short—especially if taken in large doses over a period of months.

"Come, dad," said Perry Gates again. "What's so interesting?"

"Just reading about that last robbery," said the elder Gates, as they started down the path to the dock. "As usual the county authorities havn't a clue."

"Robbers!" said the younger man in disgust. "I've been praying they'd drop around, or that we'd get a tidal wave, or something. But I've lost hope."

"Stick around, Perry," laughed his father. "But what have we here?"

Nothing interesting, Perry Gates thought. A few fishermen, a family with small children, a couple of girls, amply protected by years and a large mama, got off. He was about to turn away in despair when there was a commotion on board the boat which was taking up its gang plank, ready to start off.

Unnoticed by anyone, a tall, stooped man, who stared near-sightedly thru horn-brimmed glasses, and whose clothing hung uncertainly upon his attenuated frame, had been sitting by the rail of the upper deck reading. Now, as he heard the whistle to start, he came suddenly to life, grasped his battered yellow suitcase, and ran to the lower deck. The gang plank was practically up as he mumbled apologies and explanations. With more force than courtesy the man in charge told him what he thought of people who "went to sleep" at their stops, and the plank was lowered.

The tall, bespectacled man, oblivious to the irritation of those who had to lower the plank, walked leisurely off, staring ahead in his near-sighted way, and stopping at the very end of the plank to make certain of his bearings. There was a yell behind, and, when he finally did get off the plank, it flew up with such force as to knock his suitcase out of his hand, which unbalancing accident sent him skidding into the crowd in one direction, while the book he had been carrying went in the other.

The volume fell at the feet of Perry Gates, who gathered it up. He noted it was "History of Rome. Vol. III." as he handed it back. He groaned inwardly, and shook his head as he watched the tall, stooped man start up the hill to the hotel. Worse and more of it! Indeed there was little for Perry Gates to live for, he felt, except maybe—lunch.

Before that satisfying, if not exciting, event he stood in the lobby of the hotel idly watching the newcomers register. The tall man, whose arrival had caused a ripple of merriment on the dock, was leaning over the register, when a suppressed voice back of Gates called: "Hey, who's your friend?"

Gates turned to see the jeering faces of two men who were familiar figures at the hotel. On the faces of others these looks might have been smiles. But, somehow, these two men, Harvey Brewster and Gerald Teale, seated there with a couple of giggling girls, never had stroked Gates the right way. The older guests had dismissed Brewster and Teale as a couple of young men who liked to strut, and show off their clothing and jewelry in front of the girls, but who kept to themselves for the most part. With Gates it was different.

Because they were about his own age, earlier in the summer he had tried to cultivate them. Brewster he found to be a tall, blond young man, with a great love for posing in white flannels, while holding long, inane, flattering conversations with the girls. Teale was shorter, darker, with shifty eyes and a passion for cards and braggadocio. Gates found little pleasure in their company because their outlook on things generally grated constantly upon his own instincts.

Also, he had early noted that, beyond a certain point, he could not approach the tall poseur, Brewster, and the swarthy, swaggering Teale. A restraint, which he could not, and did not care to fathom, warned him this pair wanted no intimates, whereupon he had dropped them save for a word now and then.

Now, as he smiled at the remark, the smile was a mere confession of curiosity. After all, while this stooped, bespectacled man gave no promise of excitement, he was the most unusual figure Gates had seen all summer. So, while Brewster and Teale and their satellites from that hour began to make the newcomer the butt of their secret ridicule and jokes. Gates, just to be different, if nothing else, began to find a mild interest in him.

Not that R. Dickson, as the register showed him to be, developed any traits of distinction. About all he ever did was to fish for perch with a scant amount of cheap tackle, using a second grade boat, which he got for less money. He would come in at evening, dump his perch in the hotel's fish box, and then walk slowly up the hill, paying little attention to anyone. After dinner, when the guests collected on the great front porch to discuss the events of the day, or the large dining room was thrown open for dancing, he might be seen hunched in a corner of the parlor, his long, studious, bespectacled face bent over some book which must at least have been as serious as the "History of Rome."

Dickson's simplicity was always encouraging Brewster and Teale to new heights. Once, when he had been there about a week, they went from jokes behind his back to open ridicule. Gates came upon the pair as they were talking to the studious perch fisherman on the porch, within hearing of their feminine circle.

"You catch lots of little ones, Dickson," said Brewster, who occasionally hired a guide to row him while he dragged an artificial lure for pike and muscallonge. "When are you going out for some big ones?"

Dickson stared near-sightedly at Brewster a moment before he spoke. Gates, as he watched, wondered if there was some note in that long, studious face which he had not seen before.

"Now," Dickson said, "I've fished for the big ones—at times. But right now I'm only interested in the small ones."

"Let me ask your advice on bait," said Brewster, with a wink at the girls behind Dickson. "Which of these would be best?"

Dickson looked over a card of gaudy artificial lures and touched one which was made in the shape of a long green frog.

"For the small ones?" Brewster asked, with a side look at his audience.

"For either kind that shape and color is best."

As Dickson passed on, and Brewster turned to explain to his circle the vast humor of the perch fisherman's belief that a long, green, artificial bait would attract even the small fish, Gates walked over to the rail and gazed out over the lake. He was sure he had seen something in Dickson's face which his interrogator had missed. So sure that he felt he must get better acquainted with the queer, studious fisherman.

THAT afternoon, after a diplomatic overture, he invited Dickson to go fishing with him in his power boat. The latter declined, but proposed that they go in his own row-boat, as he didn't want to go far. Two o'clock found them at a point half a mile south of the hotel, casting their wriggling minnows shoreward toward the reeds. For close to two hours they lay thus, the slight rolling of the boat being the only movement. Perch after perch came flapping in with little or no comment on the part of Dickson. Occasionally, when the biting fell off, Gates would look over to find his companion buried in a book which he had drawn from his pocket.

Finally Gates couldn't help saying: "Mr. Dickson, doesn't the deadness of this place get on your nerves?"

The other man blinked at him over his glasses. "It is quiet," he admitted. "But I guess that's what people come here for."

"Not I," said Gates. "I'm here because father likes it. But, say, I can imagine it a real place—for a few minutes, anyhow. If those robbers would just blow around!"

"Robbers?" said Dickson, in his sleepy way.

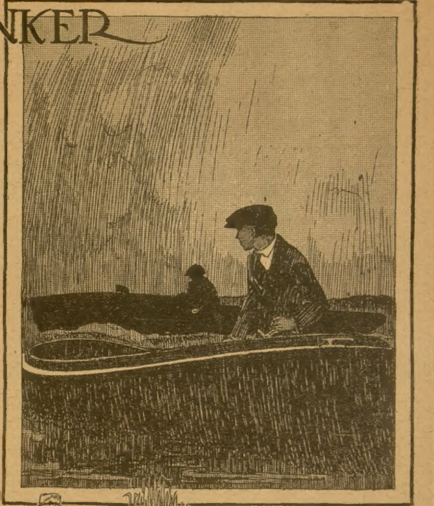
"Yes. They've been working all summer. One gang—maybe two. They sneak into cottages afternoons, when people are out bathing, or evenings when they're on their porches. Then there have been two safes blown."

"What would you do if they came?"

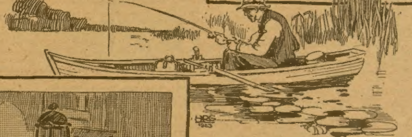
Gates found his questioner's face turned away, as he took off a perch. He plunged his hand into his pocket, and, when Dickson again looked up, a dark little automatic was in the college man's hand.

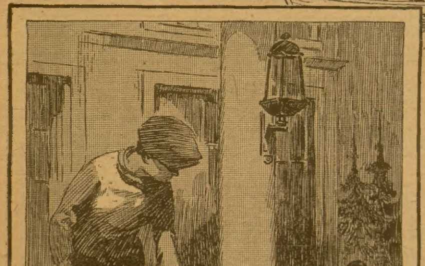
"Suppose that lily pad was Mr. Burglar," Gates said. He leveled his gun, took swift aim, and the short barrel spat a bullet thru the leaf which lay about twenty feet from the boat.

"Let's see it," said Dickson. From his satchel he selected a bright float of orange and black, and tossed it some thirty feet out on the water. Then the gun in his steady hand rose and fell



Out of the Dimness There Shot Across His Bow a Low, Black Boat, Fairly Flying Over the Water.





Vaguely He Saw a Man Leap the Hedge and Start Downhill Toward the Dock.

with the waves until there was a crack, a puff of smoke, and the float flew into the air as splinters.

Perry Gates suppressed a gasp.

Dickson merely commented: "True gun, you've got there."

"True aim you have, I'd say," said Gates But his companion had fallen back into his silent perch capture, with anon a look at his book.

The sun was low when they put up Dickson's boat and started across the dock, which was dotted with hotel guests. Suddenly, back of them, there was a scream, and they turned in time to see a girl, who had lost her balance, plunge off the dock into the water.

The two men were at the edge of the dock instantly, Dickson tearing at his shirt. Gates restrained him. Kicking off his low shoes, he made a quick graceful dive, and, while the excited crowd watched, located the girl, shifted her weight over his right shoulder, and swam around to the place where the dock was low, for the landing of smaller boats.

There eager hands helped him raise her from the water. As Gates sat on the edge of the dock, panting from his exertion, two men picked up the girl and started for the hotel with her. Some one drawn by the shouting asked them a question, and a man who had seen the whole incident caught their answer.

"They saved her!" said the eye-witness indignantly, as he came over beside Gates, who was putting on his shoes. "That's what they just said. I saw the whole thing. That taller one was acting the fool with the girl, and she tripped and fell off. I noticed they ran around like a couple of idiots while this boy jumped in and saved her. Now they claim the credit.

Gates, who was up, started for the hotel in anger, for he had recognized the self-avowed heroes as Brewster and Teale. But Dickson, who was beside him, grasped his arm and advised: "Let them alone. People who saw will tell."

Something in the tones of Dickson, for the second time that day, impressed Gates. Then the gleam—it seemed more like a flash of commanding poise than anything else—faded, and Dickson again was the plodding, near-sighted fisherman.

The girl Gates had saved came to him that evening and thanked him. She knew, at least. But he was wrestling with other matters. Try as he would he could not banish the two or three times that day when Dickson had suddenly appeared different. He must, to satisfy himself, at once seek out this man who seemed so strangely to have momentarily dropped a mask.

But Dickson was not in his accustomed corner of the parlor. There was no light in his room. With a word to his father, who was on the porch, the restless young man strolled down the hill toward the starlit lake. There he had a feeling that he must go on the water. So he backed out his motor boat and started northward across the lake.

He had gone less than a quarter of a mile and was not far off shore from a line of private boathouses when he heard the faint sound of another boat approaching. Familiar with the sound of most of the engines on the lake, Gates turned his head curiously. By the faint noise of this boat, and the absence of a headlight, it must still be some distance off.

Yet Gates sensed the fact that the boat was close and approaching swiftly. As he watched, fascinated by the low, smooth hum of this strange engine, a hum hinting of tremendous power, he shot his wheel over gasping. For, out of the dimness, there shot across his bow a low, black boat, fairly flying over the water. It carried no headlight, and, has his boat been a few feet in advance of its position, it might easily have been cut in twain.

Gates was about to yell after the black phantom when he realized that he, too, was an offender. His own light was not on. He lit it, and continued north. For close to an hour he rode, then turned back. When he was still some distance north of the place where he had met the strange black craft he again heard the low peculiar hum of its engine. The impulse of the hunt was in his blood, and he pointed his own craft toward the sound, and went forward at top speed.

When he was more than two hundred yards off shore he heard the hum cease. He surmised the black boat was entering one of the boathouses lying north from the hotel. He raised his headlight and strained his eyes to see just beyond its range. Just as the edge of his zone of light touched the boathouses he thought he saw the doors of one of them swing quickly shut. But he was not certain, and he had to bring his boat quickly around as he was dangerously close to shore and moving at reckless speed.

GATES was awakened next morning by his father knocking. The older man was excited as he entered and said: "Perry, you may get your wish——"

"We're leaving?"

"No, about the robbers. They came the closest yet last night. The safe at the home of Mr. Hammond, over on Gull Island, was robbed of $20,000 worth of jewels and money. The owner was away. The caretaker just told us. He's on his way to report it to the county authorities."

After breakfast Gates found Dickson on a secluded part of the porch reading. When Gates greeted: "Going fishing?" the other man blinked up at him and said: "Yes—I nearly forgot." Out on the lake he continued forgetful. Gates was secretly denouncing himself for seeking such company when he suddenly turned to find Dickson studying Otter Island thru a pair of binoculars.

As he discovered his fellow fisherman watching, Dickson offered the glasses to Gates. "My eyes don't amount to much," he explained. "Try down toward the lighthouse. The sun's against you up this way."

There was just a trace of the commanding poise of yesterday in Dickson's tone. From it Gates saw Dickson did not care to have him turn the glasses toward Otter Island, where he had been studying a speck of a boat. So he took in the lighthouse and flanking sapes, wondering all the more about his companion, who was once more bent over his book.

They were back at the dock by the arrival of the noon boat. Once more Perry Gates watched with hope, and once more the arrivals stacked up disappointingly. He and Dickson followed them up the hill and into the lobby, where the daily formality of registration had attracted the usual audience.

Only one man stood out, and he distinguished himself as belonging to that class of bores who make all remarks in such tones as to be universally heard. After considerable discussion of accomodations in a booming voice he asked Mr. Bond, the proprietor, if there was a safe. As the latter nodded, the newcomer drew from his pocket two bulging wallets, which he lay on the desk.

"Taking no chances on burglars," he said. "I've been reading about them."

"Can't blame him, either," said the elder Gates, as he and Perry answered the dinner call. "I'm glad your mother's jewels are safe at home, and I've nothing but a checkbook."

Perry Gates gave a groan of disgust. These elder people all were taking such precautions that it was unlikely the robbers ever would come. Another boat had arrived, and nothing new. Where was Dickson, he asked himself after lunch. There was nothing to do except go fishing.

At that moment the tall, stopped man passed. "Want to see Mr. Bond," he explained. Then, as he found the proprietor, Gates heard him say: "What are you going to have vacant soon? I'd like a larger, airier room, if possible.

Mr. Bond thought a moment and said: "The only thing would be that large room occupied by Mr. Brewster and Mr. Teale. They've just given notice they're leaving Saturday." The hotel man went on to explain the room was situated on the first floor of the hotel, in a wing which reached into the very edge of the forest, and had its own entrance.

Dickson shook his head. "That would be a little too expensive for me," he said. "Let me know if there's anything else."

Gates was dissappointed to learn Dickson wasn't going fishing. He was irritated when, in mid-afternoon, he found the latter bending over his book on the porch, evidently having an exciting afternoon with the ancients. He was foolish, he reflected, to give this tall, studious enigma any consideration whatever. But the stagnation told, and when Dickson, at dusk, invited him to go for a row, he gladly consented.

For a time Dickson, who was rowing, let the boat lie a quarter of a mile off shore, while the last purple tints deepened to gray, to slate, finally to the bluish-black of night. Then he stirred suddenly. As he began to row he said in a low emotionless voice: "So you've been lonesome here, have you, Gates?"

"Not exactly lonesome. There are people. But——"

"But they don't do anything. That's the idea?"

"Yes—why?"

"Well"—Dickson's voice came in cadences as he pulled—"I can't promise—to make things over permanently. But I might—show you a little—excitement for a while."

"Could you?" Gates asked eagerly. "How?"

"Don't raise your voice," said the other. "I'll tell you soon."

He rowed on thru the darkness, gradually approaching the lower end of Otter Island. Then, rounding a little cape, he grounded the boat and they stepped out. With a powerful flashlight, which was never turned upward from the ground, Dickson piloted Gates thru the woods.

At last he darkened the light, and they proceeded more slowly. Then a dark, square shape loomed up. Dickson bade him wait, and approached alone. Dimly Gates knew a door had been opened. Once, thru chinks in what seemed to be a deserted hut, he caught the faint glow of the light. Then Dickson was back, leading the way to the boat again. As they got in he deposited a basket which Gates had not noticed before.

"I wanted to get some bait over there," he said.

Gates could not see, but, thru the darkness, he seemed to feel a change in his companion. Dickson had suddenly dropped his slow, methodical, plodding way. Gates was sure if he could have seen that face now it would be filled with the commanding poise of which he had seen flashes. But, even without sight to help him, in the tones and acts of his companion he now felt a capable, dynamic force working with finished cleverness toward some unknown end.

They docked at a boathouse above the hotel, a place where Gates had not been before. By a circuitous path they went thru the darkness to the rear of the hotel, and entered by a door Gates never had used. In his room Dickson picked up a scrap of paper upon which was scrawled a few words: Then he turned out the light, and led the way up another flight of stairs to the roof.

Once he shot the rays of his light about, then drew Dickson on a bench. "Walls have ears," he said, "But I've never heard roofs accused. Gates, I've watched you, and I believe you're not only spoiling for excitement, but capable of handling yourself. I'll offer you a bit of adventure tonight, if you know how to obey and keep still."

"Let's hear about it."

Dickson continued, close to his ear: "I know where there's going to be a little fun. If you'd like to help out, I'd be glad to have you."

Gates stared thru the darkness questioningly. Then he slipped the other man his hand, and said: "I'm with you. What's the dope?"

FOLLOWING directions given him by Dickson—directions which told him nothing of the ultimate object but put him in a fever of excitement—Gates was up at midnight, clad in sweater and rubber shoes, his automatic in his pocket. Carefully he approached a dark corner of the hotel, as Dickson had directed.

Two shadows stepped out to meet him. One was Dickson, the other an indistinct man, with a grip like a vice. "Now get this," whispered Dickson earnestly. "Remain at your post faithfully—all night if need be. Don't stir until something happens. Don't shoot unless to save yourself. That's all, except be careful as you go around."

The delightful mystery of the thing appealed to Gates as much as the atmosphere of tenseness. He was so excited that it was nearly an hour before he began to find that the ground on which he lay behind a hedge was covered with pine needles, that it was very chill, as well as the air, and that there was no indication whatever that anything was going to happen. Dickson might not be a dull-eyed bookworm, but could well be a wild-eyed visionary who who cooked up empty mysteries to keep people out of bed.

Gates was at the point of getting up and starting away, when he heard a slight noise at the main door. A moment later, across the lobby where the safe was situated, he caught the faintest gleam upon the wall. Then he realized that the dor had been opened, and that he was watching somebody work in front of the safe. Oh, for some spyglasses now! He crawled forward, then peered from behind a large plant in a tub.

By straining his eyes he could make out some hammer-like instrument striking the knob of the safe with regular, noiseless blows. It was ghost-like, this one yellow patch of light in the inky darkness, with the pounding instrument coming down thru it with even, quiet regularity. Then the knob was off, and a pair of hands in black gloves were working with a shining tool.

Gates crept closer. He was on the porch now, and, as he watched, the safe opened, and he saw the black hands go inside. But only for a moment. Then some shadowy form came between him and the light, and instantly the place inside was filled with heavy struggles and panting.

Gates stood gasping, trying to decide whether to rush in, or drop back. At that instant his question was answered. There was a hissing tear at his right, followed by two shots. A dark body had come thru the window and vaguely he saw a man leap the hedge and start down hill toward the dock.

Gates was after him, running his swiftest, trusting to luck for his footing. As the man ahead turned from the regular road, and plunged into a woodland by-path Gates realized that the fugitive's chances for escape were growing. So, putting every ounce of strength into the effort, he came quite close and made a flying dive. He felt himself strike the man's legs, but knew, too late, that he had erred in the darkness and gone too far to one side.

The man ahead, escaping the full force of the tackle, sprang aside, still keeping his feet, while Gates struck the ground and a small stump at the same moment with a force which dazed him. By the time he was stirring again he heard a motor boat making its way from the shore, and heard footsteps coming from the direction of the hotel.

Dickson's flashlight was upon him. His revolver dropped as he recognized Gates.

"He's getting away in a boat," Gates whispered, as he struggled to his feet.

"Never mind," said the other, his voice filled with the lust of the chase. "I got one—he's with Bill. This one ahead was the lookout. He was just at the foot of the stairs, and gave Bill the slip—tore out a screen."

While explaining Dickson had led swiftly to a boathouse and was unlocking the door. He pushed Gates on board a boat. A rasp of a lock, the doors opened, and the lake breeze came in. A moment Dickson listened. The sound of the other engine was growing thin and indistinct as it raced toward Otter Island.

"We've just got time," said Dickson as he started the boat. Gates recognized it at once as the black phantom which had narrowly missed striking him. He ducked his head before the onrush of air while the low black craft tore thru the water with the speed of a motor car.

Less than half a minute after the other boat had stopped close to the middle of Otter Island, the swift boat in which Dickson and Gates rode grated on the sands of the little bay in which they had landed once before that night. Both men, guns in hands, hurried thru the woods. Near the hut they paused. Inside was a light. As they crept closer they could make out a swift, nervous scratching of dirt mingled with a low, indistinct mumble.

Dickson and Gates crouched outside a moment, and Gates thought he heard his companion chuckle. Then they moved forward, Dickson ahead. Inside, his back to them, feverishly digging beneath some planks which he had torn up, was a man. Dickson looked on quietly for a moment, then seemed to think it was time to let his presence be known.

"Teale," he said in a quiet, even voice, "don't bother. I've got it over at the hotel."

The man inside turned, white and gasping. He was about to swing his spade when Dickson covered him, and said: "Be a nice boy and slip them on. If you don't, I'll turn you over to a young man out here who's aching to wallop you for the way you made him bump himself."

THIS time the black swift boat bore directly to the hotel dock. As the three went up the hill they were surrounded by none-too-assured guests who had ventured forth to learn the details.

In the lobby there were two groups. One was around a house man who had been delegated to watch the safe but who, for some reason, had fallen a ready victim to a chloroformed handkerchief. The other centered about a large man who had held Harvey Brewster, now in handcuffs. Both groups turned in astonishment to see Dickson, the perch fisherman, march in with Gerald Teale similarly adorned.

Their astonishment was shared in a lesser degree by Perry Gates as he saw the master of the round-up in the light. Shorn of his glasses Dickson's eyes shown out clearly. His stoop had vanished; his manner was dominant and masterful. Gates wondered why he never had realized before that the awkwardness with which Dickson wore his clothes was due to the cut of the clothes themselves, not to the man's physique.

"Mr. Bond," Dickson said, "Will you notify the authorities. Have them call in everybody who's lost anything to identify their stuff. I've got it all up in my room. Mr. Teale expected to find it in his safety deposit vault over on Otter Island, but I'd been there first. I caught ten thousand perch, brought up a special boat, and read the history of Rome three times thru specs to find that place!"

"But you——"

Dickson drew a card. "Engaged by Stokes, of Chicago, one of the first victims," he said. "I'd chased this pair all summer, and vowed I'd finally trip them up right at home. I told them once the long green gets them all—big and little, and when my pal blew in and made a flash of that stage money they swallowed the old long green lure, hook, line and sinker! Even told me ahead of time when they'd check out."

Gates was beside him. "I want to thank you, Mr.——"

"Dickson will still do. A real sportsman couldn't go after even small ones like this with a siene. There should be handicaps, to give them a chance—like that fool crack about the 'long green.' Then you, an inexperienced man—more green. And I warned them! My father and I are in the same line. I didn't care to scare them off with the family name. I went them one better, called myself just what I am: Dick Dickson."

With a low chuckle he went on: "Thanks, Gates. I never dreamed they would break thru us, or I'd have told you what you were in on. As it was I was just expecting to give you a show. As you participated there'll be a check——"

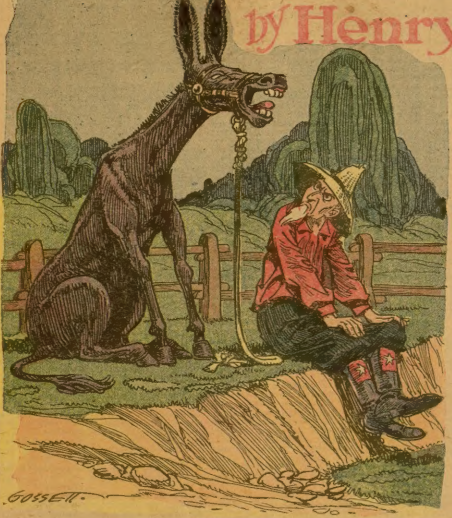
"Forget it!" said Gates. "You'll be around awhile?"

"Yes, there'll be details. And I want to go out for perch again. I don't get much chance at the small ones. Some time I want you to come over East, and I'll take you out for big ones. I know some first class holes from the Battery north!"

THE END.

A MULE THERE WAS

by Henry C. Vance



EZRA HUFFSTUTTLER had been reared on a farm, and, unlike thousands of ambitious rustics, he hadn't gone back on his raising, by seeking fame and fortune in the larger municipalities, where the propelling of trolley cars must needs be accomplished. Ezra's sole claim to fame was that he was the champion whistler of the Toadvine district.

Now, from down near the barn of Mr. Huffstuttler's estate, came the clatter of lumber, the occasional rat-tat of a hammer, and the grating of saw, as it negotiated knotty pine boards. Added to this conglomeration of noises, was Ezra's whistle. Mr. Huffstuttler bore down on "Hot Times in the Old Town Tonight," with a zeal that caused occasional passers-by to look with envy. Mrs. Huffstuttler had often reproved him for indulging in rag-time music, but the elongated Ezra invariably closed these arguments with the assertion that "Hot Times" had been good enough for the first Mrs. Huffstuttler, and therefore she of a more recent vintage overstepped the bounds of etiquette in finding flaws.

On this particular afternoon when the thermometer registered 99 in the shade, Ezra rent the atmosphere with shrieking bars of a forgotten age and his spouse, seated near the kitchen window was engaged in the gruelling pastime of churning. The continual clatter and the unusual display of energy had aroused her curiosity. Ezra had told her nothing of any contemplated erection of house, or annex of barn. Still, the resonant clatter of carpentry was proof sufficient that Mr. Huffstuttler was not only building something, but that he was going about it in dynamic fashion.

The help-meet hoisted the window, and with an eye of appraisal viewed the architecture of the building in progress. She noted the miniature lines of the scraggly framework, and by virtue of the fact that small space was being covered, she was lead to a false, tho happy deduction.

"I swanny! I believe Ezra is building a garage. Maybe the dear old soul is going to surprise me by bringing a flivver home."

With such pleasant anticipation running riot in her system, its small wonder that Mrs. Huffstuttler number two, could wait no longer for the appearance of butter in that churn. She left it to jell of its own accord, and hurried down to the barn.

"What the world you doing, Ezry?"

Ezra, true to the traditions of genius, failed to allow this rude interruption to break the perfect metre of his solo, whistling thru to the grand finale.

"I say, Ezry Huffstuttler, what kind of a contraption is this you're a-building?"

In a silence that would do credit to the Sphinx, Ezra eyed the sun for a time, removed a section of home-spun tobacco from the recesses of his overalls, and reflectively bit off a hunk.

"Ezry Huffstuttler, I do believe you're a-building of a garage." She leaned forward expectantly. The lady had dreamed innumerable times of gliding hither and yon in a flivver of her own. Only dreamers persist in clinging to the illusion that flivvers really glide.

"Garage for what, by Dam?" Ezra was forever by-damming his way thru life.

"You can't fool me, Ezry. I think you're a-putting up a garage for a flivver." She was grinning mischievously at her lord and master.

"Well, you got another think coming to you, by dam! You're a wild-guesser, Mattie." As the tears of disappointment welled in Matilda's eyes, Ezra guffawed vociferously.

"What you building, then?" There was a slight tremor of voice, and the lady daubbed eyes with the corner of apron.

"I ain't a-building no castles in the air," harshly responded Ezra. "One castle-builder in the family is a little more than a plenty. I'm making a house for a mule."

"House for a mule?" Astonished almost beyond words, Ezra's better-half allowed jaw to drop, mouth to open and eyes to stare blankly.

"By dam! you heard me the first time. See that critter over yonder in the lot? I bought her of Tim Huckabee."

"How come you to buy her? You ain't needing of a mule."

A peculiar gleam came into Ezra's eyes. His muscles became taut, his body took on rigidity, his chest expanded, his ears wiggled. Then in mystic tones he asked: "See that mule over there?"

"Course I see that varmint."

Still speaking in a monotone, Ezra continued: "Well, that mule is my first wife, Elvira, returned to this earth, and I feel it my boundin duty to take care of her. Therefore I says to Tim Huckabee, says I: 'What you take for that mule?'

"'What'll you gimme?' says he.

"'One hundred and fifty dollars,' I says.

"'You're traded with,' he says.

"'Gimme the halter,' I says.

"And here we are, this mule and me. It's Elvira as sure as 'tater bugs, and I'm going to fix up a comfortable place for her to live." Whereupon Mr. Huffstuttler took cuspidorial aim at a grasshopper, showered the innocent insect with tobacco juice, and reached gangling arms for the saw.

"How come you to think it was Elvira?" Number Two's lips were quivering now.

"A voice from above told me it was Elvira. I was a-riding down by Tim's place on a load of hay, and the little gray mule on the off-side shied. I pulled up the reins, and one of the premonitions hit me. Intuition is a quare thing. 'Elvira is nigh,' says a still small voice from out'n the sky. I looks over in Tim's lot, and there is that there mule looking at me out'n the corner of her eye, just for the world like Elvira used to do."

Mr. Huffstuttler paused and hitched up his galluses, "'By dam!' I says under my breath, but I got up courage enough to tell that mule to come here, speaking in the imperative. Instead of obeying me, she kicked up her heels, and run right the other way. When she cut that caper I knowed it was Elvira for sure, for that woman, even to her dying day, never done nothing I told her."

Mrs. Huffstuttler vehemently stamped her foot. "Come here this minute and let me smell your breath, Ezra Huffstuttler. You've been drinking again, and I'm going to have you churched!"

Ezra backed away, gazed once more towards his recent and treasured purchase, and allowed vocal chords full sway. "Just as soon as I seen that it was Elvira back on this earth in the form of a mule, the call of duty comes. I knows its up to me to protect her, and look after her comforts, so I ups and buys her from Tim, and I'm going to build her the nicest little home that any mule ever had."

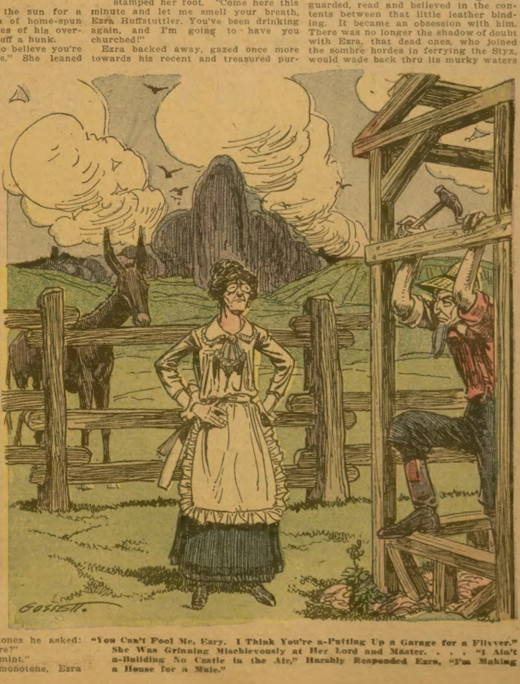
"You poor fool!" Mrs. Huffstuttler whirled upon heel and strode kitchenward.

BY WAY of explanation it should no doubt be mentioned that it was solely due to the defective memory of a tourist that Ezra Huffstuttler stumbled into the ranks of a queer faith—a faith unheralded and unsung, insofar as the Toadvine district was concerned.

A traveler had spent the night at Ezra's house some twelve months ago, an incapacitated automobile tire causing him to seek lodging. This queer stranger had pored over the contents of a book, long after Ezra and his spouse had retired. Next morning, thru carelessness, the treasured volume was left behind.

Ezra came across it a few days after the departure of the guest, and since he had fingered its pages caressingly, and waded thru its strange doctrine. Hidden from view behind a convenient haystack Ezra had spent many earnest hours in drinking in its preachments. It had to do with a lengthy treatise on the transmigration of the soul. There in no uncertain terms was typed the unqualified declaration that after death, the human body and soul was reconstructed into an animal, or bird, and sent once again into the land so wantonly desecrated by Adam and Eve, at that remote time when they had elected to ignore rules and by-laws and sink bicuspids into the apple of knowledge.

As the days rolled by, just as they have a chronic habit of doing, Ezra guarded, read and believed in the contents between that little leather binding. It became an obsession with him. There was no longer the shadow of doubt with Ezra, that dead ones, who joined the sombre hordes in ferrying the Styx, would wade back thru its murky waters



"You Can't Fool Me, Ezry. I Think You're a-Putting Up a Garage for a Flivver." She Was Grinning Mischievously at Her Lord and Master. . . . "I Ain't a-Building No Castle in the Air," Harshly Responded Ezra, "I'm Making a House for a Mule."

as mules, elephants, or would fly back as feathered songsters or katydids. He was as positive of this as he was that there was no upside-down to a cotton seed.

When one pores and perspires, and perspires thru one's pores, and wrestles with a doctrine as patiently and as zealously as did Ezra on the theme, transmigration of the soul, the idea inevitably becomes fixed in one's mind.

It was thus that Ezra had become a champion of this new cult. He was rather quiet about his wonderful discovery of deliverance, however, and each Sunday accompanied the devout Matilda to meeting. As the pastor raved over the sins of syncopation, the curse of cards and the danger of drink, Ezra turned his deaf ear to the rostrum and thought deeply of his adopted creed.

As the pastor climbed the peaks of eloquence, Ezra would sit and debate with himself as to whether he had rather return as an elephant, and do stunts in the circus, or as a mosquito, that he might pester the life out of neighbor Sullivan, who had once been so unscrupulous as to pawn off a complete sty of runts upon him with accompanying affidavits that they were pedigreed Berkshires.

Church was, by no means, a bore to Ezra, and he realized quite a heavy tonnage of fun sitting thru the service, and picturing members of the congregation in the after-life. Wouldn't Tiny Tobin, the corpulent 300-pounder of the Toadvine district, look ludicrous several years hence as he sat in a gilded cage, warbled continually and at canary food!

And, there was Bud Hankins! It would indeed be a godsend if Bud could fly back as a hornet and sit down several times upon Lafe Wilson, who had the habit of singling Bud out every time fluids of fermentation had beclouded his brain. On such occasions—and they were indeed legion—Lafe would look Bud up, plant fist in face and knock Bud into the star-studded reals of unconsciousness. Bud had been battered so consistently by Lafe that he sported a pair of cauliflowered ears and a nose out of plumb. As a hornet Bud could indeed be able to reap granulated gobs of revenge, provided, of course, Lafe survived the less fortunate Bud in this vale of tears.

Such ludicrous thoughts were perpetually coursing the mind of Ezra of a Sunday as he sat and quietly surveyed the faces of the congregation.

These instances are brought to light merely to give undoubted proof that Mr. Huffstuttler was wrapped up in his new-found religion. But it had taken the mule incident, wherein the deceased Elvira had once more arrived upon the scene of activity, to create dissension in the otherwise peaceful life of domesticity—to spur Ezra on to public avowal of his creed. This confession had fanned the flames of the loyal, tho sensitive, Matilda's ire. Too often Number Two had imagined her shortcomings were such that Mr. Huffstuttler was not as satisfied and contented as he had been with the initial spouse; and now that Ezra had insisted upon bringing Elvira's spirit upon the estate, this, within itself, was proof enough that her deductions had been correct. Therefore, it would have been unnatural, indeed, had not hatred for the mule swept over the melancholic Matilda.

Ezra was recognized by the Toadvine constituency as a man firmly "sot" in his ways. And he was so sure of his ground in this instance that he outfitted a home for the be-spavined and string-halted hay-burner that would have done credit even to the petted and pampered thorobreds of turfdom. The little room was weather-boarded so that none of winter's chilly blasts could sweep thru to the interior; it was floored and equipped with a blanket for a bed. And, to cap the climax, Ezra installed a stove therein and boldly announced his intention of keeping the little shack heated in winter.

This accomplished, Ezra sat down to supper one evening feeling that he had done his duty when he had hearkened to the still small voice from the unexplored nowhere.

Mrs. Huffstuttler calmly spread a bit of golden butter upon a portion of corn pone and gazed in silence at Ezra. If the gentleman had been more than a casual observer he would surely have noted that his wife had been crying. Following her flood of tears, however, Matilda had resolved to make the best of her peculiar position at any cost. Now she smiled wanly. "Guess it ain't so bad after all, that you got that extra mule."

Ezra nonchalantly knifed a portion of turning greens. "How do you make that out, Mother?"

"The little bay has got the distemper, and you can substitute this here mule in the plowing. It's lucky that we had her to fall back on."

"By Dam! Never in this world will I shackle Elvira to a plow." Ezra's answer carried a heavy tonnage of emphasis. He brought his fist down upon the table as a punctuation mark. The excessive jar made for a clatter of dishes, and a cup and saucer toppled to the floor with a crash. Even imitation china will not bounce.

Mrs. Huffstuttler was trembling.

"What do you think I am—one of them imbeciles? Nothing would disgrace a feller quicker than hooking the departed spirit of his wife to a plow. Besides, spirits ain't strong things like us of the flesh, nohow."

Having delivered this ultimatum, Ezra resumed his eating.

The remarks of this dyed-in-the-wool Transmigrationist had been terse, and to the point; but the wife had gathered enough to realize that—while the mule in question was not really ornamental—it was to be more ornamental than useful. It was plain he had determined the animal should emulate the Lily of the Valley, in that it would neither toil nor spin.

FOLLOWED troublous days in the Huffstuttler household; periods in which the gloom hordes descended upon the frail, little help-meet and brought down plentiful woe upon her head. Days in which the imps of jealousy ran rampant over the Huffstuttler premises, and prodded the unhappy woman.

It suddenly dawned upon Matilda one afternoon, as she perspiringly picked at the weed plague, that here she was laboring under a blistering sun, in an effort to raise corn, upon some of which the mule might gorgeously gorge herself!

If the departed Elvira had been there in the flesh, Matilda could have arrived at a solution to the inexplicable problem, in the form of a tongue-lashing, or hair-pulling. In this particular instance, however, it was different. Matilda knew better than to seek torture of the mule's hide, as a means of retaliation, for the hybrid of the species has always two pile-driving feet, exceptionally quick on the trigger.

The Cleopatrian idea of poisoning the animal had presented itself, but she was too good a church-going woman to foster such an atrocious idea for long.

Truly here was an eternal triangle which might cause a wiser head than she possessed to wrestle with. She did resolve, however, to visit the bank next day, draw three hundred dollars from funds left by her mother, place these in the hands of Ben Sherer, village trader, and ask him to go that limit in his bid for the creature. Cognizant of Ezra's weakness for cash, Matilda hoped that such reckless bidding might cause him to put aside religious scruples and forget temporarily this accursed theology.

Forthwith she put her plan into action, and Ben, highly elated over the prospect of the deal, and having gained Matilda's permission to keep for himself any of the three hundred dollars he might save by striking a clever bargain with Ezra, repaired to the Huffstuttler farm, confident he could bring about the acquisition of the mule.

Ezra was busy with curry comb upon the hide of Elvira, when Ben drew up in his buggy. Mr. Sherer threw his dangling legs over the wheel. "Mornin', Ezry."

"Tolable, Ben—just tolable. They ain't had none of that there chill tonic up to the drug store lately, and I feel shore them chills is coming back on me." Ezra shuddered at the hovering spectre of such a miserable malady.

"Chills is pretty bad, but then some of us fellers ain't going to be troubled none with chills in the hereafter." Ben guffawed vociferously at his own repartee.

"They ain't going to be no hereafter, Ben!" Mr. Huffstuttler had now reached that stage as a Transmigrationist, where he was bubbling over with ecstacy of its wonderful truths.

"If they ain't, what and the hell is going to become of us?" Ben's curiosity was getting the better of him.

"We will all return to this earth in the form of a bird, or animal or something."

"Then, I'm a-coming back as a skunk, so I won't have no pestiferous neighbors allers nosing around in my affairs." Again Mr. Sherer guffawed at length, while Ezra curried in silence.

"Purty nice specimen of a mule-hood you got there——" Ben looked over the animal with an eye of approval, and fondled his beard. "Purty nice looking, I'll say. Just the weight of a mule I need to match up with that bay of mine." Despite Ben's obvious invitation to talk trade, Ezra continued currying.

Exasperated over his fruitless attempt to draw interest, Ben took whip in hand and meditatively hammered shoe with its handle. Then—"Tell you what'll do, Ez—I'll give you two hundred and fifty dollars for that mule!"

Mr. Huffstuttler never batted an eye, but gazed Benward with a far-away look.

"Ding bust it! I'll make it two seventy-five, and I wouldn't think of doing that, if I didn't need a match for the bay so all-fired bad."

Ezra glared. He spat visciously upon the ground. "By Dam! you get off'n my premises, Ben Sherer. Some evil spirit has prompted you to come here. This mule is my dead wife, Elvira, returned to this mortal coil, and she's not for sale at any price!"

Mr. Sherer greeted this announcement with a mirthful cackle. Ezra was turning purple with rage, and unable to further control his temper, Ezra snatched up a scantling, and lunged for Ben. That worthy, however, was too wary. Benjamin came down upon the back of his little pony with a whip, and—pronto—he was carried away from the wrath of Ezra.

That unsuccessful episode erased from Matilda's mind all hope of getting rid of the mule by sale. She had reached the point where she pouted continually, and sulked at her work. She absolutely refused to aid further in the making of crops, and this stubborn balk on her part necessitated the acquisition of a paid employe upon the farm.

Matilda Huffstuttler was not alone in her involuntary campaign to shower the Toadvine district with the briny tears of sorrow. There was Tim Huckabee, for instance. Tim, thru his efforts to enrich the coffers of the family treasury, had sacrificed the greatest plow mule and all-round farm animal in the county. Now he was awakening to the remorseful realization that the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars was nothing as compared to puny crops, which were suffering for the likes of the mule he had so foolishly bartered to Ezra. Elvira could turn more dirt with a plow and get over the ground at a swifter gait than any mule Tim had ever been associated with. And these facts were coming home to him with jaw-rocking precision.

The knowledge, too, that fanatical Ezra was allowing the animal to wax fat from last season's food crop, and was perfectly willing to let such excellent farm help dwell in idleness exasperated Tim. He made up his mind to effect a trade if possible.

As a consequence he visited the Huffstuttler farm one afternoon firmly resolved to purchase Elvira, no matter what the cost.

Matilda was seated upon the porch busily engrossed in dealing out self-pity upon herself, and her sad countenance was proof enough that the ravages of jealousy were leaving their mark.

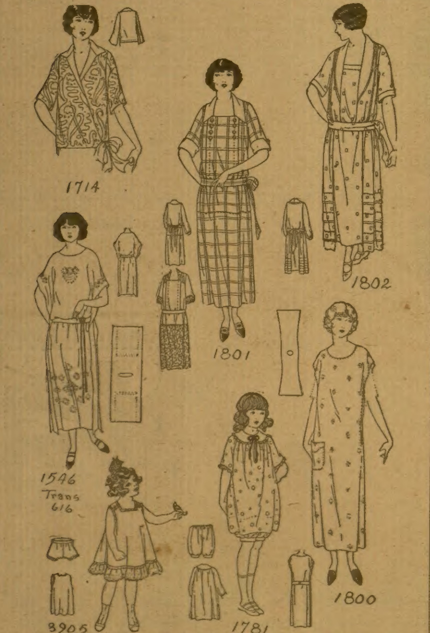
"Evenin', Mis' Huffstuttler." Tim chivalrously removed his frayed straw and placed a wisp of grass between his teeth.

"Howdy, Mr. Huckabee; how is the folks?"

"Tolable only—just tolable. How are you all?"

"The casualty list ain't increased none since Job Tuggle got knocked out'n his head by that mule you sold Ezry, tho I have to keep my fingers crossed at all

NEW LEDGER PATTERNS



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times to feel safe." Mrs. Huffstuttler sighed a sigh of the oppressed and gazed wanly towards Elvira's bungalow.

"Why and the Sam Hill don't Ezry sell that mule, nohow?" inquired Tim. "He don't never work her none, and she ain't brought nothing but bad luck since he bought her of me. I'm needing that mule bad, and I'm willing to give him twenty-five dollars profit for her back."

"Ezy ain't been quite right in his head for several months," sighed Matilda. "Since he got that new-fangled religion he's been a fit subject for the lunacy commission. Ezry thinks the varmint is his first wife, Elvira, come back to earth in the form of a mule, and he's sot on keeping her."

"I'd be willing to make it fifty dollars profit, Mis' Huffstuttler, if I could get that splendid co-worker back. That's the best plow mule I've ever saw." Tim was pleading eloquently.

"A hundred dollars profit would be just the same, Mister Huckabee. They say every man has his price, but I don't believe Ezry would sell out on this mule proposition if you offered him a million dollars in cash. Ezry thinks that what he don't know about the transmigration of the soul ain't."

"Well, I guess I better be getting along back home, then, Mis' Huffstuttler, but I shore wish I had that mule." Tim reluctantly withdrew toward the gate.

As Tim's brogans came down methodically in the dust on the homeward trail his eyes gleamed and he smiled broadly. It was clearly evident that a plan was formulating in his mind.

ANOTHER week of woe dragged slowly by. Ezra was Sphinxlike in his attitude and conversation was a minus quantity. Matilda noticed one morning, however, that the door to Elvira's little home was open. Matilda allowed curiosity to get the best of her, and she walked down to the little shack and peered within. There was no Elvira in sight!

Mrs. Huffstuttler retraced her steps to the house, and tried to forget the incident, but the thing kept turning itself over in her mind. What had happened to Elvira? This question kept bobbing up.

When Ezra came in from the field for the noon-day meal, he partook of the repast in silence. Matilda was about to crack under the strain.

"Ezry, have you sold Elvira?" Never was a question more eagerly put.

"Nope!" Following this one-syllabled reply Ezra fiercely forked a biscuit.

"Has she run away, then?" Mrs. Huffstuttler's pulse-beats were coming at a faster clip.

"Nope!" That one word seemed to make up the sum total of Mr. Huffstuttler's vocabulary.

The remainder of the meal was negotiated in silence. Ezra disappeared as Matilda was clearing the table of dishes, and she hurried thru the dish-washing routine. This done she changed to her best gingham dress and left the premises at a brisk pace.

What had happened to Elvira?

This momentous question was running rampant in Matilda's mind.

She negotiated the intervening space between the Huffstuttler and Huckabee farmhouses in record-breaking time, and coming upon Tim Huckabee, as he was engaged in the pastime of skimming sorghum from a sirup vat near the house, she drew up almost out of breath.

"Evenin', Mister Huckabee." Matilda fidgeted nervously, as Timothy, with snail-like precision, poured skimmings into a bucket.

"Evenin' Mis' Huffstuttler," Tim affected this greeting without raising his eyes from his work.

"Hope you are all well?" These preliminaries must come, in spite of Matilda's anxiety over the baffling mystery confronting her.

"Tolable, I'd call it."

Mrs. Huffstuttler watched his nonchalant skimming impatiently. She was seeking information as to the mysterious disappearance of Elvira. She could stand it no longer. "Tim Huckabee, did you buy Elvira?"

"Naw'm. You said there was no use of trying to buy her of Ezry, so I give up that idea last week." Tim drawled this information despite Matilda's apparent hurry.

"Do you know where Elvira is?"

"Shore! That's her down there in the lot." Tim's frontispiece was one solid blanket of grins.

"How come her over here?"

"She belongs to me." This was volunteered with pride. Owning a mule of Elvira's capacity for work was something not to be sneezed at.

"How come she's yours—if you didn't buy her?" It was evident that Tim's assertion had struck Matilda, as bordering on the incredulous.

"Ezry up and gives her to me!" Again it seemed that Mr. Huckabee would break the standing broad grin record of all time.

There was nothing in the world that would prompt any woman to desire to throw her arms around the scrawny neck of Tim Huckabee. But, Matilda would have accomplished that very thing, but for the fact that Mrs. Huckabee was in the house nearby, and such a compromising attitude on the part of the enraptured woman would have called for a lengthy and minute explanation as to the real reason therefor.

Instead, Mrs. Huffstuttler allowed laughter to creep into her system for the first time in months. She shook to her toes with an abundance of giggles. "How in the world did you get that mule, Tim?" She managed to gasp this between convulsions of laughter.

Mr. Huckabee's chest got busy on an expansion campaign. He allowed thumbs to creep under his galluses in an important attitude. He jauntily tilted the frayed straw hat to one side of his head. Then in his quaint, drawling voice, "Mis' Huffstuttler, you find diplomacy in the D's. When you told me that fool, Ezry, thought that mule was his wife come back to earth in the form of a fodder-destroyer, I got busy on some pow'ful thinking. Am I making it clear, Matilda?"

"No light dawned yet to speak of," she admitted.

"Well, my dear woman, I ups and gets some real birth-rate data, securing a affidavit from Squire Higgins that this mule was sired and foaled two years before poor, old Elvira Huffstuttler kicked off'n this mortal coil." Tim raked the toe of his boot thru the sand in meditative fashion and continued, "They say Elvira died of pneumony, but I allers will believe that she contracted it by getting too hot from excessive talking. That woman could talk the horns off'n a pipe organ."

This bit of reminiscence was lost on desert air, so far as Matilda Huffstuttler was concerned, however, for tears of joy were flooding her cheeks; and a woman wants to be alone when she reaches this status of happiness. No stroll thru the Pearly Gates and adown the Golden streets of Paradise will ever prove more joyful than Matilda's walk thru the woodland on the return home. The fragrance of the wild flowers had never seemed so sweet, and the perfume of a summer breeze never bathed the flushed cheeks of a more blissful being.

As she made exit from the wooded copse near her own home, with poke-bonnet in hand, and its strings trailing in the carpeted meadow of green, the chug-chug of a gasoline engine was wafted to her thru the growing dusk.

She looked toward the abode of the mule, Elvira, from whence emanated the clatter of mechanics.

Ezra Huffstuttler was backing a brand new flivver out of it.

HER WAXEN MAN

AUGUSTIN W. BREEDEN

IT WAS a stormy December midnight. In a luxuriously appointed room, furnished in antique fashion, and walled on two sides with ancient tomes piled pell-mell on shelves of curiously carved wood, Gerald Osbourne, clad only in a velvet dressing gown and brocade slippers, sat with his side and back to a dying wood fire and nodded from time to time above an illuminated volume of the Life St. Augustine.

Above the ornate and nail-studded door swung a transom lamp, as much to give guidance to benighted travelers on that lonely coast as to illumine the room within. The light from it fell in five broadening rays thru as many vents in the brasswork of its sides. One beam fell upon the marble statue of a laughing Greek slave exposed upon the block for sale, and cast a grotesque shadow of her upon the rich crimson carpet of the floor turning it to inky black where it fell.

Another ray illuminated dimly the rich page of the ancient book and the cadaverous form of the young man. In the dim light the face of Gerald Osbourne looked dark and pinched. His lips were blue, and there were dark shadows under his eyes. His raven hair fell in unkempt locks low over his pale forehead. The tapirs in the candelabra to his left had been blown out by some sudden gust of wind, but he seemed not to notice their lack. From time to time he sipped at a goblet of wine or drummed softly on the table with the long and lean fingers of his right hand. Before him stood a silver wine carafe, and besides the Life of St. Augustine, which he appeared to have been reading, the table was strewn with other folios, quartos, and manuscripts. A calendar on the wall proclaimed the dying year in large figures—1433.

Gerald Osbourne had recently come from overseas, where he had been fighting against the French for his King, called home to England by the illness of his beautiful young cousin, Geraldine, a girl to whom he had been bethrothed in her babyhood, but who, following the death of her scholarly father, had repeatedly refused to marry him because of his wildness and wantonness, preferring rather to live in the atmosphere of her father's books and art treasures until such time as her betrothed should suffer a regeneration of heart and learn to love her with that high devotion which, she conceived, a true knight owed to the lady of his choice.

Gerald Osbourne had found the once beautiful and blooming girl emaciated beyond his power to recognize her and delirious beyond power to recognize him, alone in the big house in the hands of grief-stricken servants and retainers and incompetent leeches—alone so far as any one of the Osbourne name was concerned except for one inconsequent creature, crazy Leonora Osbourne, whom his elder brother Walter had ruined one year before the Battle of Agincourt, away back in 1415, and who ever since she had lost her mind had been kept shut up in some remote part of the big house. Thus he had found Geraldine ten days ago; and yesterday he had seen her laid away in the vault of her ancestors in the little church yard on the headland overlooking the moaning sea.

Now, stricken with remorse, he had been searching since the servants had retired, thru books that he knew she had loved, for any pressed flower or fern leaf, or any scribbled note upon the margin, or any bracketing or underscoring of the text, in short, for any trace of her soul in the footpaths of her reading. His long-slumbering conscience, now at last fully awake, told him he must learn to love her, not as he had dreamed of her for so many years for her rose-pink body, but for her high, clear spirit, which while she lived he had never tried to grasp or realize.

But the man from French army camps now struggled with a demon within him—with a troll, a familiar, that drove him perpetually to see, not her sweet, pure face, as he had last seen it in health, but her body as he had seen it in campfire dreams, rosy and warm and pulsing with life and invitation, or else blue-white and emaciated and disgusting as she lay between camphored sheets waiting to be hurried out of sight as fast as decency would permit. Bah! The odor of camphor and of a certain heavy French perfume, which he had so often smelled while holding high orgy in places of the worst repute in Harfleur or Rouen, seemed mingled in his nostrils, deadening his senses; and, try as he would, he could not find the soul of Geraldine.

"This is my punishment," he groaned. "My God, how long is it going to endure? D—n the profession of arms and the schools of lying free-thinkers, and the shameless wenches that follow our armies! Oh, if daylight would only come, or I could get a little sound sleep. I shouldn't have dismissed my man. I've a notion to ring till I have aroused the whole household. Now the servants are sleeping like swine after

(Concluded on Page 13.)

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The Concluding Chapters of

The Man-Napper

By Richard E. Thompson

PART II.

"JACK!"

DeLuff awoke with a start; something was pulling on his arm, and it was broad daylight.

"Jack!—Wake up! It's time to go aboard, and I'm just dying to——"

But DeLuff never heard what she was "just dying" to do; for he found himself looking, not at a black veil, but at——

"You!" he gasped, leaning toward her and staring with his whole being. "You!—Why, you're—you're beautiful! —wonderful!"

She laughed—and made him marvel yet more at her loveliness.

"Thank you, Jack," she said quietly, and drew back from him a little. "But really, did you think I'd be so very homely?"

"And you're my wife!" he murmured uncomprehendingly. "Why on earth were you so anxious to marry me? I'll admit I'm not over modest, but—but——"

He paused abruptly, looked deep into her eyes, and without any warning threw his arms about her and drew her close to him.

"Jack!—No! No!" she cried, and DeLuff felt the revolver jab into his ribs again.

He released her with a grunt.

"No, Jack!" she repeated faintly. "Not yet!" And DeLuff saw that the color had fled from her cheeks. "Wait—'till we get on the boat."

When the "Arvada," bound on a Mediterranean cruise, cast loose of her tugs and made her way slowly out of New York harbor, some two hours later, John J. DeLuff was standing innocently by the rail, watching the Statue of Liberty fade away from sight. But he was scarcely conscious of the beauty and picturesqueness of the scene which his eyes beheld; for he was thinking—thinking over the swirl of events that had transpired during the past few hours.

He shook his head slowly, and stared down at the water far below. No, it didn't seem possible, he told himself. If he had heard of such a thing in a story, he would have condemned it as overdrawn—impossible. And now, he was actually on his way to Bermuda—with the prettiest little thing in the world!

He heaved a mighty sigh. Perhaps she had been right, after all; perhaps it was a "dream," not a nightmare. Still, he wondered. What was it all for? Certainly there must be some explanation. How under the stars had it all been carried out successfully? How had the girl gotten the marriage license? How had she gotten rid of his chauffeur? How—— But the most important question was: how was it all going to terminate?

DeLuff shook his head again. She had engaged separate suites; had told him that until they had really learned to love each other, their relationships would only be those of friends. He liked that—it showed that she had sensitive, delicate, refined feelings: that she was a lady.

There was absolutely no doubt about that—she was a lady in every sense of the word; and from the tip of her toes to the end of her beautiful and abundant gold-brown hair. That made the mystery all the greater. Why—how could she have done this—this——

"I'll be darned if I know!" DeLuff despaired aloud.

"Hel-lo-o," came softly from behind him. "You darned again?"

"Oh, hello!" He turned and greeted her with an unsuppressed grin. "I didn't know you were there!"

"Um-hum," she assured him, with a nod of her head. "Just came out. Isn't it pretty over there," and she gestured toward the fleeing harbor.

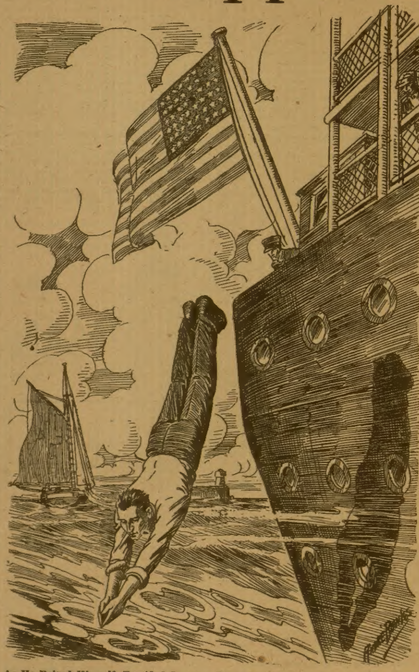
"Say," she continued, "I'm awfully sorry, but I told a lie. This cruise is to the Mediterranean."

To her surprise, DeLuff did not vociferate "The Mediterranean!" as she fully expected he would: he just smiled and said very quietly:

"All right. That will give us time to learn to love each other, won't it?"

And Ann blushed deeply, hastily said something about being glad he wasn't awfully angry, and then suggested that they lunch.

THAT evening, John DeLuff and Ann sat side by side in the big, comfortable steamer chairs on the upper deck, and talked. But they talked not of the happenings which had led up to the present circumstances—both seemed voluntarily to avoid the subject. They talked of things impersonal; of things which, in spite of their impersonal character, strangely drew them together; of things which seemed to reveal their innermost souls to each other, and united them with deep, unspoken of, yet strongly felt ties—of the great, round, golden moon which was climbing slowly up the eastern horizon; of the silver stars that flashed their message thru the silent stillness of the night; of the vastness of the universe; and lastly, of God and love.



As He Poised Himself, Terrified Screams Rang Out From Behind Him, But He Scarcely Heard Them. One, Two, Three Deep Breaths He Drew; Then, Letting His Body Fall Slowly Forward, He Dived as Far as His Tense Muscles Could Shove Him From the Threatening Hull.

And a great happiness throbbed in DeLuff's heart. It seemed to him that he had just learned what it really was to live—to live and know the goodness and joy of God's world. He forgot the events of the previous twenty-four hours—forgot everything but that the girl's hand rested quietly in his—tho he did fancy it trembled slightly—and that God was everywhere.

They sat there late, and, as the moon sank lower in the west, they spoke but little. Then at last, when the Gilder of the Night had stooped to kiss the placid occidental sea, they arose, at the girl's suggestion, to find that they were the last to linger on deck.

"A kiss good-night?" he asked as he looked deep into her eyes. They told him yes, but her lips said:

"No, not yet."

So they parted as two friends would take leave of each other for the night, save that he caught her hand and held it in both of his for a silent moment; and then they went to their respective rooms.

But before DeLuff climbed into bed, he knelt at its side and thanked God for the "dream," and prayed that he might never awake.

Ann, too, knelt by her bed; but her cheeks were streaked with big, unrestrainable tears. She had been successful, yes—but—but—Oh!

The following morning and day passed as all the ensuing days thruout the voyage across the Atlantic. DeLuff and his bride breakfasted together, and thenceforth were with each other almost incessantly thruout the day, enjoying to the full the different pleasures that the luxurious ship afforded. And, when the smiling moon arose, it found them in the same quiet corner of the upper deck that they had occupied the first evening.

There were times when DeLuff was on the verge of doing what it was only natural that he should do—of bringing up the subject of their marriage; of insisting that she give an explanation of the whole business. But each time he postponed doing so, for he feared that he might end the "dream"—the "dream" that had commenced with a "nightmare." And each time that he procrastinated, he feared to mention the subject still more; for with each passing hour, he found that the blue-eyed, pure-souled little girl had burrowed deeper into his heart—had found her way into the very depths of his soul; so that he not only felt that her happiness was paramount—too precious to risk, no matter for what cause—but feared nothing so much as that, in some unforseen way, she might fade away from him as suddenly as she had come. There seemed to be but one way to guard against this: that was to be as agreeable as—as he wanted to be! Therefore, the great, shifting Atlantic was crossed without even the slightest word being spoken regarding the affairs that had precipitated the voyage. But at the close of each evening DeLuff wondered the more; and the more heartily agreed with the wise, tho unknown poet who penned:

"How oft would we, in blindness rash,
Reject the best that God doth give,
Were not His power, and love Divine?
Unlimited by time or space?"

SO, ON the eleventh morning of the cruise, as DeLuff waited at the entrance of the dining-room to greet his bride with "Good-morning," and to breakfast with her as usual, it was not astonishing that when the head waiter touched him gently on the arm and handed him a sealed note that he tore it open with hands that were not quite steady. He scanned the well-written lines hurriedly; and a great emptiness swept thru him as he read:

> **Dear Mr. DeLuff:**
>
> **The time has come for me to tell you the truth. Maybe I ought to say confess the truth. You and I are not married to each other. That was not a real minister, nor a real wedding. You are free. When you reach home you will find the check you gave him and the same amount of money you gave the witnesses. That makes all this cost you nothing, for, of course, your passage was paid before we met each other. Your time is all that it cost you and you don't do anything but live on your money, anyhow.**
>
> **We won't ever see each other any more because we'll be miles apart when you get this, but I can't help asking you to forgive me and believe that I'd never have done it for my own sake. Good-by,**
>
> **ANN ANDERSON.**
>
> **P. S.—That's not my real name, so you needn't try to find out anything with it. Good-by, ANN.**

DeLuff's jaw dropped, and he stared at the white sheet of paper with unseeing eyes. For a full minute he stood absolutely motionless. Then he turned and made his way blindly to his room. He closed the door slowly, as if he really believed that he still might hear her call to him from without; then he sank into a chair, passed his hand across his pounding brow and commenced to reread the awful note.

The "Arvada" had been skirting the northern coast of the Mediterranean for the past three days, and had, early that morning, docked at Marseilles to unload a special consignment of freight, tho a stop at this port was not listed as part of the "Cruise." It was there, then, that Ann must have left the ship.

"Gone!" DeLuff whispered aloud. "My—my dream girl—gone!"

He started up from the chair, sank back into it again; then sprang up, caught up his hat, flung the door open wide and almost ran out to the dining-room and up to the portly head-waiter.

"How long ago did you get this?" he demanded excitedly, thrusting the piece of writing paper before the nose of the astonished garcon.

"Just before we left the dock, sir, not half an hour ago," he obliged respectfully. "Perhaps not more than ——" But DeLuff was gone.

People stared at him as he rushed wildly out on deck, but he gave them no thought; for there, already hazed by distance, was Marseilles—vanishing—vanishing—vanishing!

DeLuff clutched the rail almost convulsively, and a groan escaped him.

"Gone!" he repeated. "Gone!" and he stared out over that hopeless, relentless, ever-widening stretch of placid blue. "Gone!"

Absently, his gaze left the city; absently it drifted back over the calm sea; absently it fastened on a little fishing sloop, some four hundred yards off their port side, and, without his being conscious of it, rested there. But, as he looked, a wild, hazardous, almost insane idea flashed into his mind, and subconsciously his hands closed more tightly about the rail. It would be a long chance; it seemed like a dime-novel idea. He bit his lip. It was a chance, tho—the only chance!

DeLuff's hands left the rail and gripped the lapels of his coat. Should he? If he did, and failed, it meant—— Well, life wouldn't be worth much, anyhow, if she were to go out of it. If he didn't take the chance she would go out of it—forever!

"O God, help me!" he murmured, and dashed off his coat. His vest followed, and then he kicked off his Oxfords and turned to the rail. The sight of his coat lying on the deck reminded him; he would need money—if he were successful!

He snatched it up and sought its inner pocket. His check book flew our, but he tossed it aside—that would be useless. Ah! here they were—the Traveler's checks he had purchased upon reaching Europe. He dropped the coat and stuffed them deep into his pant's pocket.

Some one put a hand on his shoulder, but he brushed whoever it was away, swung himself over the rail, and stepped to the very edge of the deck. As he poised himself, terrified screams rang out from behind him, but he scarcely heard them. One, two, three deep breaths he drew then, letting his body fall slowly forward, he dove—dove out as far as his tense muscles could shoot him from that threatening hull.

It was a long way to the water; and it seemed to DeLuff that he was hurtling thru space for an eternity. But finally there was a heavy impact, and he realized that he had struck the water.

Down shot his hands from above his head, and with powerful strokes he drove himself to the surface. He flashed one swift backward glance at that great black bulk towering above him, and at the same time fairly hurled himself thru the water—away from that gurgling, foaming, sucking trough that roared at the ship's stern. And a prayer of thankfulness left his open lips as he saw the great mass glide past him, and felt himself tossed about like a chip, but not drawn down into that churning, hissing, sucking swirl.

In less than fifteen minutes he was being hauled aboard the fishing sloop by the members of its crew—three much excited, wildly jabbering Frenchmen. It had been a hard swim with all his clothes on, especially as he had not spared himself in his anxiety to get to the boat; and naturally he was rather out of breath; but as soon as he could he spluttered:

"Voulex-vous gagner mille francs?" And then he told them that he would make it a thousand francs apiece if they would get him to Marseilles in half an hour.

AND so, in exactly twenty-four and three-quarter minutes, by DeLuff's water-soaked watch, a shoeless, hatless, coatless, vestless, and very wet but eager American millionaire ran down a long Marseillain wharf, followed closely by three hard-pressed, suspicious, yet hopeful French fishermen. And this same, ordinarily very dignified American millionaire let out a typical Indian war-whoop when he discovered two American-made trunks reposing peaceably at the foot of the pier, bearing tags which read:

> **A Mlle. Ann Anderson—Hotel Mediterrance Avenue des Arbres—Marseilles.**

So that was her name, after all? He smiled. Whether it was or not didn't make much difference, for he knew what it was going to be just as soon as he could get some dry clothes on and wire his bank for more money!

That evening, when the moon—a thin crescent of sparkling silver—crept cautiously up from the Orient, it searched in vain that deserted corner of the "Arvada's" upper deck for some trace of the man and the maid it had so often seen there. Finding none, it crept a little higher into the clear evening azure to further its search. It sent its lucent rays across the resting Méditerranean, into the coves, and over the hills, making lovely the whole world in its hunt for them. And at last, it found them, seated close together in an open palm-strewn court. So it did its caressing light linger upon them, that he might see the love that sparkled in her blue, blue eyes—so that he would wonder still more at her loveliness.

"Darling-mine," he was breathing. "I wouldn't let you explain before, because —because I wanted to prove to you that it was you I wanted, no matter who you were, or what made you do it all—because I wanted to be where I could hold you tight when you did explain, so I'd know you weren't going to fly away from me again!" He paused, and drew her very close to him. "But—but now——" he suggested.

"Yes, Jack," she whispered, and nestled close to him. "It's easy to explain. Doesn't—I mean, didn't what used to be my last name sound familiar to you?"

"Hollwoode—Hollwoode," he repeated thoughtfully. "Why, the only time I ever heard that name before—I never heard it before, except there's a logging company of that name."

She smiled and gave his hand a little squeeze. "That's it," she said; "but don't interrupt me now. I want to make it as short as I can, 'cause I want to talk about—other things.

"Mother—our mother!—and I—we, now!—own that company. You see, father is dead; there's just mother and me."

"No there isn't!" he protested.

"Forgive me!" she laughed. "I meant there was just mother and me! Anyhow, about a month ago, I got a letter from the foreman of our camp, and he said that the big Mourmount Logging Company—their camp is a little south of ours—was doing everything possible to hinder our men and make it hard to get out the logs. He said that unless we could get hold of the five-mile strip that's between the two camps, we might just as well shut down.

"I had a talk with our manager, and told him to buy the strip, which, of course, belongs to you. He offered you every last cent we could spare, but you didn't think it was enough."

"I was——" he started.

"A fool, an ass!" she teased. And then she kissed him and added: "No, you weren't! You know I was just fooling!"

"Go on," he encouraged.

"You didn't think it was enough, so you wouldn't sell. Then after a little while I got another letter from camp, saying that things were getting worse, and that it had been learned that the Mourmount Company was going to buy your strip.

"We had a big back payment on logs coming in on the fifteenth—that's today—so I had him, I mean the manager, write to you and ask for an option on the strip until then. But you said that you were anxious to sell, and that as you already had made an appointment for the coming Saturday to discuss an immediate sale, you could not hold the proposition open for us, but that you'd let us know if the strip was still for sale after Saturday.

"Well, I felt kind of blue for about an hour, for it looked like—like the end of the camp. And you see, that wouldn't matter so much if it weren't for mother, for she is—isn't well, and if the camp failed, it would mean that she would have to come back from—from Saranac Lake, and she's getting along so nicely up there. And——" She paused, and DeLuff held her even a little more tightly.

"You're a little hero!" he said with a voice that was a bit unsteady.

"So I made up my mind that the camp couldn't fail," she went on. "And I got to thinking, and then I made up my mind that here was only one way to save it. And that was to stop you from keeping your appointment, and keeping you somewhere where you couldn't sell until we could put the money in your lap and make you sell to us.

"So I came down from the Lake that same day, and played detective for a day, and, and—you know the rest."

She looked at him.

"Do you love me as much as you did?" she asked. And she was not at all disappointed with his answer.

"But," he said, some moments later, "I don't see how you got rid of my chauffeur."

"That was easy," she replied. "I followed you to the theater in a taxi, and heard you tell him to call for you. And then I followed him to the garage to see where it was and went to a pay-station and called him up and told him that you said that if he'd run the car around to the theater, and park it there, he could have the night off; that you'd drive home yourself.

"Wasn't I naughty? And I hired a chauffeur, and told him he must be absolutely deaf and dumb. Then I called up your valet, too."

DeLuff chuckled. "And the minister?"

"He's a lawyer. Used to be a great friend of my father. I had an awful time to get him to do it."

"But how did you know when to book our voyage for? How could you be sure that you'd be able to kidnap me that night?" DeLuff asked.

"I just had to kidnap——" she interrupted herself with a pretty little laugh, "to man-nap you that night, 'cause if I'd left it 'till Friday, you might have suspected something. So——"

"No, I never would have, darling!" he assured her.

"I was pretty sure that you'd go out most every night, when I found out you lived all by yourself. And I didn't care where you went as long as it was in your car. So I just asked God to help me, Jack, and went down that morning and booked our passage on the first ship I found that was going to sail the next morning. Of course, it had to be going a long way off, too. Then I went ahead and made arrangements for our 'wedding' for that night. And then I followed you to the theater, that night, and—and man-napped you. And Jack," she looked up at him mischievously, "those poor Smiths thought it was a real marriage, all the time!"

They watched the silvery Skiff of the Sky as it sailed smoothly towards the western horizon. Oh, it was a wonderful, wonderful world!

"My own little girl," DeLuff said at last, "just one more question, unless you're too tired. What made you start for home as 'Ann Anderson'?"

"I was hoping you'd ask that," she confessed. "I wanted to tell you."

"It was because——" she stopped and toyed with his necktie, "because I prayed that—that you had learned what I learned on the trip. And somehow, it seemed if God were—were going to answer my prayer, that maybe you'd try to follow me as soon as the boat stopped somewhere, and—and I really couldn't see how you could, but I thought it would be easier, maybe, if—if I stayed 'Ann Anderson.' That's why, Jack."

There was a silence. The moon hid itself for a brief instant behind a billowy cloud; then again flooded the balmy courtyard with its soft splendor.

"What were you doing then?" she asked.

"Praying," he answered simply.

"Funny, so was I!" she whispered. "Want to know what about? I was thanking God that I'd played kidnap—man kidnap. I was thanking God for you!"

"Funny," he said, "I was, too! I was thanking God for my little dream-girl!"

THE END.

* * *

The Peasant's Clock.

A PEASANT went to the jeweler's and asked him to fix his clock so that it would run one day ahead of time.

His request was granted, and for three or four days the Peasant thought himself a clever man. He got his hired help up early and made them work late, but one morning he was found with tears in his eyes, and when asked what was the matter he replied:

"I had a note due tomorrow, but having set the clock ahead I must pay the note one day sooner than I had figured on. My credit will, therefore, be ruined!"

Moral—Do not be too smart, but just smart enough.

Log Cabin Talk

FUR de fust fifty y'ars of my life I was allus skeered dat de sun would rise in de no'th.

—

De man who dies tonight won't be grafted on tomorrer.

—

De longer I lib de longer I find out dat if I should be tooken away de world would run along jest de same.

—

My old woman sez to me sez she: "Rastus, do they keep Sundays in jail?"

"Of co'se dey do, Judith," I replies. "Ebery prisoner dat wants to make a hole in de wall an' escape must do it on a Sunday."

—

When a man cums to yo'r house to borrer money, you want to axe him to lend you two dollars befo' he kin axe you fur five. In dis way you kin allus save three dollars.

—

Some floks don't seem to understan' dát de savin' of time am like de savin' of money. A footpad spent thirty minutes goin' thru my pockets in hopes to find ten dollars. He reckoned he could find what I couldn't.

—

My old woman sez to me sez she: "Rastus I has gone barefoot fur a y'ar, waitin' fur you to buy me a pair of shoes"

"If you has gone barefoot a y'ar, den you must be used to it, an' you don't need no shoes," I says.

—

When my landlord don't cum arter de rent de day it am due I reckon he am dead. When de does cum he don't git no money, an' so I live a happy life.

—

It was way long in December of last y'ar dat I found an' carried home a lot of fly screens, an' so I don't have to look around fur any, jest now. Allus take what you kin git an' git it befo' some other feller does.

—

I hain't contributed anything to de heathens fur de last five y'ars and he hain't contributed anything to me, an' so it am an even thing, an' neither one of us should complain.

—

"Rastus, what did you bring home wid you a frew minutes ago?" said my old woman to me when I got home last night.

"It was a barrel of something," I replied.

"Yes, but what is in dat barrel?" she persisted

"I was in too big a hurry, but I will open it now. I hope it am bacon, but it may be 'taters. When you grab quick you may git fooled. Why, it's wagon grease 'stead of something to eat, an' I carried it a mile an' a half fur nuffin'."

—

If my naybur gits two days' start of me in plantin' 'taters, I git two weeks de start of him in diggin' out de crop. De world will make even an' you needn't worry about it.

* * *

A Pastoral Romance.

IT WAS a night in June. The great round moon flooded the meadow with radiance, lighting each dewdrop to the brilliance of a diamond engagement ring. A big elm tree cast a friendly shadow over the gate where he and she stood, shoulder to shoulder. He felt her warm breath upon his neck, he saw her deep, dark eyes turned appealing toward him, but he made no attempt to circle her with his arm, or to touch the soft, pink mouth so near his own.

Was he a dumbell?

No. He was a red-blooded, young farmer.

And she?

Was his Jersey cow.

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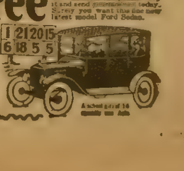


The Kid Gets a Job

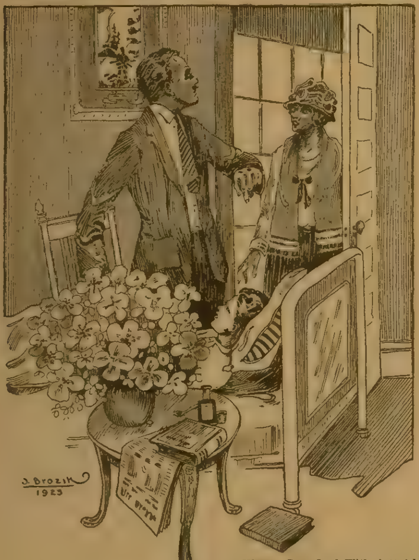
(Concluded From Page 2)

the evident interest of the boss in him, but the kid continued to grin.

BILL McGUIRE had had a bad night. He blamed it on the kid. He had met him as he came thru the big gate and the boy had grinned as he looked Big Bill squarely in the face and said:

"I want to thank you, boss, for the job. I'm sticking with it so that I can help you with those figures some day."

It was then and there that Bill McGuire understood the fascination of that grinning face. It was not the freckles, nor the grin, nor the shock of reddish-brown hair—it was the elusive reflection of another face, a fairer face, a face from out the long dead past!



The Woman Transfixed With Astonishment, Had Stopped Just Inside the Door. Wide-eyed She Looked at Big Bill McGuire and But Half-Audibly Exclaimed, "William!"

Big Bill went home that night and tried to read, but on every page he found that face of the past. He smoked, and the face floated in the changing clouds from his cigar. He tried to sleep, but in the darkness came that face out of the gloom of the years. At last he slept, only to dream. His troubled soul, which had been buried these many years under the crust of his determination, spoke to him when sleep had rendered his sense impotent to protest. The whole story came back to him with ruthless vividness. His was the blame! He had been the hasty, unreasonable one. Marta was right—she had always been right! His unreasonable anger, his vanity, his notion of what it meant to be masterful with a woman, had driven her from him and he had paid—God, how he had paid! He had loved and lost. His iron tyranny had turned her from him! Had she married another?

Whether she had or not, made no difference. He had turned her against himself!

Awake, Big Bill could throttle such thoughts and dreams. He went to the plant that morning in a fierce humor. With strange perversity he blamed the kid for this night of regrets and vain longing. He walked thru the plant until he came to the core room. Little devils seemed to be driving spears into his brain. He wanted to make some one suffer. He saw the kid:

"Here, you get over in the moulding room with the Italians!" he ordered, his face vicious with hard lines.

"All right, boss!" the kid replied, and his astonishment did not prevent the grin from appearing on its freckled background.

The boss went white. Workmen who saw his face thought the whiteness the result of rage, but that pallor came from a heart that all but stopped beating when Big Bill saw that grin again. For a moment things went back; when the big boss had control of himself again, the kid was gone.

Big Bill knew that the moulding room with the Italian gang was no place for the kid. A voice within him kept telling him to return to the moulding room and send the kid back to the ovens, but for these many years Big Bill had been stifling that voice. He paid no attention to it altho it kept speaking to him thruout the day. That night Big Bill could not get his mind off of the kid until he had promised himself to seek him out the first thing the next morning, apologize, and send him out to the ovens. But one may make rash promises in the dusk and repudiate them in the strong light of the morning. The boss did not get to the moulding room until mid-morning.

As he came into the smoke-begrimed building he peered thru the fog vapors. Great ladels of moulten metal swung here and there on the cranes. Sparks sputtered in half a dozen places; there were the usual dins and confusions.

From recently filled moulds, little wavelets of gassy smoke eddied and swirled about a boyish figure. The kid was gathering up the smaller frames and moulding pins and throwing them to one side. The Italians were hurrying here and there with the smaller ladels of white-hot metal. The kid, picking up the last frame, turned toward a bench. Thru a haze of smoke came a half-blinded Italian with a ladel of metal. The kid's warning cry came to late, the Italian bumped into him. The ladel fell to the ground and a shower of sparks shot to all corners of the foundry. Both the kid and the Italian sprang back, the kid getting but a slight burn on his arm and the Italian coming out without a scratch or scar. But his narrow escape aroused a blind rage in the Italian.

"Whata hella, ya try to do?"

The kid grinned. The grin added to the Italian's rage.

"Den-a you laugh! I meka you laugh! I breaka da back, maybe ya laugh a then!"

His hairy arms went out for the boy, who leaped back only to be followed by the savage laborer. The kid's right fist shot out and caught his assailant on the chin. The Italian staggered back. The kid stood there smiling. In a second the gang of Italians, determined to make short shift of this stripling who dared to strike one of their number, rushed onto him. Several knives appeared. The kid grinned. He struck out with all his strength. Again and again he sent his fists home. Then came a twinge of pain in his shoulder, a blow on the side of the head and he went slipping—slipping—slipping.

Big Bill saw the beginning of it. At first he had experienced something resembling a grim pleasure in the prospect of seeing the grinning kid taken down a peg by one of these Italians. When he saw the gang rush onto the boy, a sudden fear seized his seared old soul. He let out a yell and plowed into the melee. He knocked Italians right and left. He swore and raved, he tore his way thru to where the kid, limp and lifeless, lay on the floor. He gathered the dirty form in his arms. He strode from the foundry vowing vengeance on every devil in the place.

"If you've killed him, you d——d snakes, I'll send every one of you plumb to h—l!" yelled Big Bill as he disappeared toward the office.

When the big boss literally hurled himself thru the office door with the limp form of the kid in his arms, there was consternation and excitement.

"Don't stand there and stare at me like an idiot!" the boss exclaimed to the bookkeeper. "Quick, call an ambulance!"

He laid the boy on the long blueprint table.

"Miss Maskin, don't you know what to do!" he said turning to his stenographer. "Wringing your hands won't get any place. A cup of water—quick!"

The water on the boy's face revived him. He looked up at the boss, stupidly at first, and then he grinned.

"Guess, something went wrong!" he said weakly, "I'm sorry, boss, I——"

They said that the big boss was a madman for two days. The ambulance had been gone less than ten minutes when he was back in the foundry and moulding room promising to kill every man who had touched the kid if the lad did not recover—and while half of the Italians did not understand his words all of them understood his meaning.

For two days Miss Maskin had no work to do other than call the hospital every hour and find out how the kid was making it. On the third day the doctor said that it would be all right for the boss to call and see the patient. As soon as he had that word he climbed into his car and went roaring across town in defiance of crossing-cops and speed laws. For some strange reason he lost his haste when he stood in the reception room of the hospital. He went slowly, even, reluctantly and fearful, to the elevator, and from it he stepped into the corridor of the fifth floor as one afraid. An obliging nurse greeted him.

"I'm looking for—for the kid—he's in room 504."

"Oh, yes; he's been asking for you. Right down to the hall to your left."

Big Bill McGuire went down the hall. It seemed to him that his footfall sounded like the boom of Niagara. He stood before the door, hesitating to put his hand on the knob. He found courage to turn the knob and push the door a little. He peeked in fearfully.

"Hello, boss!"

That wasn't the kid's voice, but, surely, that was the kid's grin. Big Bill stepped into the room and went slowly toward the bed:

"Kid, are you really pulling thru?"

"Sure, boss; I'm most well!" and the grin broadened.

Bill McGuire didn't know it, but he sat down beside the bed and took the kid's hand in his and whispered:

"God, how much he looks like Marta," and then, with such composure as he could command, he asked: "What does your dad have to say about it? Suppose he blames me——"

"My dad," the kid interrupted, his smile looking as if he had it on crooked, "has been dead for I don't know how long; but mother is here. She'll be in in a minute, and——"

The door opened and Big Bill McGuire turned to see who had come in. He stood up. His face went white. He stepped back involuntarily until he was against the bed and his great hand began hunting over the coverlid for the hand of the kid as if the boy might protect and sustain the man.

"Kid, it's Marta!" he exclaimed.

"It's mother, boss."

The woman, transfixed with astonishment, had stopped just inside the door. Wide-eyed she looked at Big Bill McGuire and but half audibly exclaimed:

"William!"

"Marta!" cried the big boss, "that smile—I might have known!"

An hour later, as Big Bill McGuire was departing from the room on the fifth floor of the hospital, Jimmy Benton said:

"I'll be back soon, boss, so save my job for me."

"Don't worry about the job, kid," Big Bill said with something suspiciously like a tremble in his voice, "there's a big job ahead of you. You've got to help me get Marta into the firm!"

"That oughtn't be hard to do," said the kid, and grinned.

"All right, kid; you've got the job!"

Marta Benson blushed crimson, but Big Bill McGuire was a hard man; there was no sentiment about him; he was inhuman; what he thought, he said, and without too much choice of words. He

The Man Who Talked At Random

HE sat in the window-corner of the Pullman's smoking-compartment and breathed fatly as he uttered his large opinions. It grew late, as so often it does; and he put the quietus on a discussion with the ponderous statement:

"I don't read advertisements. They have no effect on me at all. I'd never miss them if they stopped printing 'em."

Then he glanced at his advertised watch and sought his lower-berth.

In the morning the ad-skeptic contorted himself out of his advertised pajamas into his advertised underwear, drew on his advertised socks, adjusted them with his advertised garters, got into his advertised suit, laced his advertised shoes and added himself to the congestion in the wash-room.

There he shaved with an advertised razor, using advertised shaving soap; brushed his teeth with an advertised toothbrush and advertised dental cream, washed with advertised soap, and brushed his hair with an advertised brush. Fastening his advertised collar on an advertised button, he neatly knotted his advertised tie, gave his advertised suspenders a tug or two, and finished dressing.

Let us leave him there, this man who never reads advertisements!

Everything worth using is advertised. Everything that isn't, rarely is.

Read the advertisements for value's sake

took Marta's hand, looked squarely into her face and said:

"Marta, I was a d——d fool! I was all wrong! I loved you then and I've loved you every minute since. I wanted you always, and I want you now. It isn't too late for me to make amends. I don't deserve it, but give me a chance."

As the two passed from the room, Jimmy Benton was sure that he saw the boss' arm slipping about his mother's waist. He thought about that circumstance for several minutes. He pondered the fact deeply. He sighed and muttered:

"I don't quite understand that boss of mine, but, anyhow, I guess I've made good in the job."

Her Waxen Man

(Concluded From Page 9)

their gorge of ale and brawn; nothing short of the noise of a cannon would awaken them!"

Outside the storm increased in fury, and little puffs of wind sent wisps of smoke curling out into the room from the dying fire and set the transom lamp to swaying gently, flinging fantastic shadows about the rich apartment.

Finally with the weariness that follows upon extreme grief, he dozed a little and felt grateful for the fleeting sweetness of forgetfulness.

"If I could only forget her altogether," he murmured wearily—"forget her, body and soul, I could at last find rest and peace—rest and peace in slothfulness and bestiality—rest and peace—"

Gerald Osbourne's head was once more nodding. Then he imagined he heard a faint tapping at the door, and, wide awake, he leapt to his feet shuddering. The tapping at the door, if such it were, seemed to him an ironic answer to his desire to drive his Cousin Geraldine from his thoughts. The silken curtains to what had formerly been her bedchamber, that intimate shrine which his wayward thoughts had so often haunted with wicked fancies, now rustled softly in the draft; and he thought wildly.

"She is passing thru; she has come to my couch at last—in mockery."

Upon her falling ill Geraldine had been moved upstairs to a less draughty bed room; and since his coming home Gerald had occupied the silken-curtained alcove to her father's study. Hence his terrified fancy.

He now took up a paper lamplighter and started to light the candle-branch and go and look thru the bedroom to reassure himself; but a horrible, sickening fear lest he should find the form of his cousin lying cold and stark upon his bed, so unsteadied his hand that he could not keep the lamplighter aflame or light the candles. He told himself with an oath that he had faced death more than once on the battlefields of France; that he was no girl; that he must pull himself together.

And now he heard the tapping once more at the front door, and, steadying himself with an effort, he at last lighted the candles and made three steps toward the door. In his agitated state he began speaking aloud, under the hallucination that he had already partly opened the portal and was speaking to some visitor.

"Pardon me, sir; but you did not knock very loudly, and I thought it only the wind at first. The servants have all retired for the night, and I am here alone. Won't you come in?"

At this point he discovered with shame that he was speaking to the empty room, and with a loud laugh he flung one wing of the big double door wide open. A sudden gust of wintry wind blew out the candles and set the transom lamp swinging wildly, flinging those fantastic shadows about the apartment. Osbourne shaded his eyes and peered into the stormy darkness. There was no sound on the broad veranda but the worrying of a dead vine against the lattice work and out in the night the deep bass roar of the sea and the sobbing of the wind and rain.

Beside himself with a sort of fear that was half superstitious hope, he stood there for a long time peering into the darkness. Could the soul of Geraldine come back to him from the grave? Was she yearning for him as he had yearned for her? And was that timid knocking upon the door a gentle appeal that she was making to him? Did the invisible and the disembodied require that doors be opened unto them? And had she passed onward into her bedchamber? Or was she in some gristly form strinkingly standing in the cavernous darkness of the veranda?

"Geraldine!"

His voice was a hoarse whisper like one's voice in a nightmare; and the wind and sobbing rain seemed to repeat over and over again: "Geraldine! Geraldine!"

In a panic of fear he wheeled back into the room, barred the door and stirred the fire till it blazed up brightly.

"Idiot!" he cried aloud to himself. "Insane fool! there was nothing at the door. You fell asleep and dreamed it; that was all."

Then in the tone of a terrified child he added: "Oh, mother of God! I wish the dawn would come!"

HE SLAMMED shut the hateful Life of St. Augustine and flung it and all the others he had been searching upon the floor into a corner, and with a bright fire blazing and his branch of candles all relighted started upon a tour of the room—her room, which had belonged to her scholarly father before her. He tried to pretend to a deep disdain for the objects of culture and art before him.

"Books and pretties don't go down with a soldier like me!" he cried aloud. "They are all liars, these philosophers and poets, these saints and scholars. Was I not on guard at Rouen during the trial of Joan of Arc? And did I not hear those old graybeards turn black into white and white into black in order to prove the girl a witch. And maybe she was a witch or maybe she was not. At any rate, such as she are not for me, for she was chaste and pure with a brow as cold as snow—but now this Greek wench here without any clothing on, she's something to my taste. Hey, my pretty one! If you were flesh and blood and not cold marble, I should know what to do with you. I would quick enough warm your cheeks with Bordeaux wine and give you my soldier's cloak for a mantle of chastity."

He stepped to the table and from the carafe poured himself a generous draught of fiery white wine and swallowed it at two gulps. Then he jerked violently at a silken-tasseled bell cord and bawled thru a curtained passage-way leading to the servants' quarters.

"Hey, Cedric, you old fat he-bear, come out of your den and look after the wants of your handsome young master!"

There was no answer. The young man poured himself another goblet of wine and drank it off. Then he began to fling the offending books and manuscripts into the fire, chuckling with glee as the flames coiled and curled about the costly vellum.

"Dead books in seventeen dead languages!" he cursed. "They shall be burned as we burned that d——d witch Joan of Arc in Rouen; and the clerks that wrote them ought to be burned in the same fire. Ha, Ha, Ha! Burn, Sibrandus of Schafnáburg, burn in h—l!"

At this point in his orgy of destruction Gerald Osbourne was interrupted by a loud knocking at the leaded window on his left. Emboldened by the wine he had drunk, he now faced toward the window and delivered himself as follows:

"All right, angel, or devil, or disembodied spirit, whatever you are that stand there wearing out your knuckles —all right Witch Joan or Witch Geraldine, whichever you are that seek to enter a soldier's apartment at midnight, I'm coming to let you in; but remember there's going to be a scandal."

This said he strode forward and pulled open both wings of the French window and stepped back with a deep bow of mock courtesy.

A gust of wind blew out all the candles in the candelabra, sent clouds of smoke whirling about the room, and set the transom lamp once more swaying wildly. For a moment there was no other sign. Then deliberately from out the darkness there come the figure of a woman. She was dressed in a robe the color of old parchment and which fell from her emaciated arms like cerements and gave forth an odor like the scent of an ancient tomb, a rotting bridal veil hung about her livid face, and a tattered wreath of artificial orange blossoms crowned her brow. Her piercing and hollow eyes gleamed like two black spiders in their holes. Clutched in her bony fingers she carried a doll, made of candlewax and dressed in a velvet dressing gown and brocaded slippers and with its head and back stuck full of pins.

Osbourne noted with a shudder that the doll was intended to represent a man and bore some faint resemblance to himself. He managed to make a second bow before the apparition and spoke again, still in a mocking tone.

"Alors, old sweetheart, come closer to my fire and warm your shanks. I was all alone here with tihs marble beauty; and tho you look a bit motheaten, I welcome you as a living woman. Come warm your blue lips with this good wine of mine!"

The apparition made no further step forward, but only clutched the waxen doll to her bosom as if it had been a child.

"Alors! You won't drink my wine, you old prude? And you won't warm your shanks at my fire? I will go on burning my dead books then! Voila!" and he hurled the illuminated Life of St. Augustine into the fire.

But this presence stood entirely too still for his aplomb. He suddenly left off burning books and found himself standing, quite sober and staring with his mouth agape at this woman in the rotting bridal veil. Then suddenly he saw the likeness—he had a certitude that this was— some dead relative of Geraldine, sent by her from the grave.

But at last the woman was speaking; her voice was hoarse like the nightmare voice of the dead.

"I burned your image once before! And they told me you died at Agincourt with a dozen French arrows in your coward's back; but I see now they lied to me. Now, perfidious spawn of the Osbourne breed, I burn your effigy again. Vox! Pax! Sycorax! Burn! Burn in h—l forever."

With that she flung her waxen image into the fire and turned and fled thru the windows, drawing the shutters together after her with a bang

The wax doll smouldered for a moment making a great feather of inky smoke and then blazed up brightly amid the smouldering tomes; and a whirl of sparks set in motion by the draft made a devil's dance upon the hearth. Osbourne gazed at it in horror, half expecting the Devil himself to rise from its center.

When it had died down at last in a whiff of smoke he turned and faced the window whence his visitor had gone. Was it indeed one of Geraldine's dead relatives? He recalled now the close resemblance to Geraldine herself. Was it? It was the dead Geraldine herself, who had come back to mock him!

"Hah, hah, hah!" he shouted crazily. "Living, she would have none of me! Dead, she visits me at midnight only to command my soul to h—l. What do you think of that, my pretty one?" He went on laughing as he addressed himself to the laughing statue of the Greek girl. "You wouldn't be such a prude now would you, if you were flesh and blood?"

His eyes took in all the full and sinuous beauty that the sculptor had so faithfully reproduced from some shameless model, and in a flash his mind revisioned Geraldine as he had seen her less than two years before, and he fancied her for an instant as the model for this statue. The next instant a shock of horror at his own audacity overcame him.

As the transom lamp swung to and fro a grotesque black shadow of this youthful Venus crawled and writhed on the rich carpet like a brobdingnagian octopus. It was as if, while the Venus was a cold thing, its wicked soul was alive in that shadow and could grope and twist and contort itself into a hundred mocking shapes. Osbourne gazed long and earnestly at the statue and then began to look into the shadow. He fell on his knees above it as if to peer the deeper into it. Suddenly it seemed to him that he was looking into the blackness of Geraldine's grave; and a full realization of her body just as she came vividly upon him and possessed his soul with horror.

"This, this!" he cried, "is because I always loved her in the flesh rather than in the spirit! I shall never, never see aught but her hideous body again!"

The last flickering flame from the burned up wax effigy leapt clear of the embers, flashed into blue and went out, leaving the chamber in deep gloom. The young man fell forward without a sound; his face buried itself in the shadow.

The next day when Cedric, his valet, came to awaken him for the morning meal, he found the young master lying dead on the floor. The old seneschal stated to the bailiff, who came to inquire into the sudden death and look after the estate, that crazy Leonora, had escaped from the tower where she had been imprisoned for years; and a search was at once instituted to try to find her, since she was now the sole heir to the House of Osbourne.

* * *

The Why of Superstition.

BY H. I. KING.

LADY-BUGS AND NEW CLOTHES.

IF A lady-bug alights on your hand it means a pair of new gloves, if on your dress a new dress, if on your shoes a new pair of shoes, etc. This, according to the journal of the American Folklore Society, is a common superstition in Massachusetts and upper Canada. The genesis of it is easy to discover. The lady-bug was the especial pet and representative of the Norse goddess Freya, the goddess of fruitfulness and the dispenser of good gifts. To this day the Scandinavian and North German farmers look for good crops when they see the lady-bugs unusually plentiful, and Teutonic and Norse mythology and folklore is full of good words regarding the spotted, little, winged insect whose markings are said to be those of the sun, in which radiant orb, according to one version, Freya had her home. From the attributes assigned to Freya it would appear that her worship was compounded of sun-worship and of the worship of the procreative forces of nature. At any rate she was bounteous in her bestowal of good gifts, and so when one of her bright little representatives alights upon any article of clothing you are wearing it naturally indicates that the beneficent goddess is going to make you a present of a new garment of the same description.

* * *

Has Got to Be Refined.

"What man was that I saw you walking with?" asked a man of another.

"It was me father," was the reply

"If that was your father then he has got to be refined."

"Of course he has. He has been over on the island for sixty days."

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31x4	2.75	.90	35x4½	4 25	1 65
32x4	3.00	1.40	36x4½	4 25	1.65
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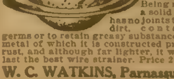

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On a Lonely Isle

By Lewis H. Moulton

THE great swamp lay wrapped in dismal silence. There was no light save the lost sunbeams that here and there straggled thru the thick foliage. Overhead, huge bats winged their ghostly flight. Over all brooded the spirit of solitude.

All day, the man had traversed this cheerless region, at times the water waist deep, fighting his way over areas of tangled vegetation that tufted the ever-widening marshy grounds; lingering only upon the drier spots to munch a few peanuts and drink sparingly from his thermos bottle.

Finally the water deepened. Before him stretched a lagoon, its solitary, inky surface unruffled—reposing "hideously serene"—currentless.

At a distance, in the midst of this lagoon, was a tiny island—a green and bushy tuft—bedecking incongruously those forbidding, sullen waters.

Gathering some loose bits of timber, and binding them with withes, he constructed a rude raft. Stripping off his clothes, he put them, together with the rifle, the bag, and the net he carried, upon this raft, and, plunging in, pushed it before him toward the island.

The bush grew to the water's edge—an uninterrupted barrier of green foliage. As the raft slid gently onto some projecting roots, he picked up his clothing and his rifle—ready to go ashore.

But a thin, reedy voice piped:

"Up with your hands!"

HE WAS startled. He had not expected this sort of reception. He became aware that a gun was pointed at his breast. He threw up his hands.

"Who are you? What do you want?" There was an unmistakable quaver in the mysterious voice, whose owner was still concealed.

And before the other could reply:

"Do you come from the State·

"Left 'em just four months ago'

Twigs snapped; the foliage parted; there peered forth a face—pale, hollow—the eyes bright with alarmed inquiry.

The newcomer was neither of the bold, swashbuckling sort, nor an acute observer. Else he would have noted that the barrel of the weapon covering him, wabbled, and that the tone in which the man of the island made his next demand, was far from assured.

"Hand over your gun, Man from the States. Don't like to inconvenience you, but I've got to be on the safe side."

The swimmer extended his weapon toward the wall of foliage, and watched it disappear.

Silence.

Then, still dripping from his recent immersion, he asked

"Can I put on my clothes?"

For another interval that seemed unnecessarily prolonged to the dripping man, there was no reply. With both weapons in his possession, the islander evidently felt no need of haste. But finally came the question:

"Why have you come to this horrible swamp? To this lonely island? What in Heaven's name can have brought you hither?"

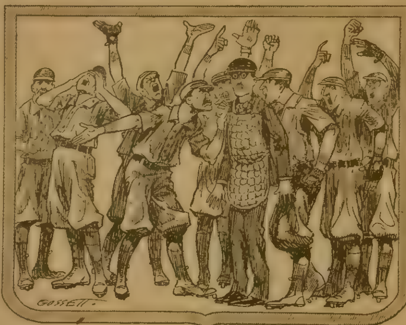
Assuming that permission had been granted, the other, climbing [illegible] his raft, and balancing himself [illegible]ly thereon, began to dress, at the same time conversing as fluently as such circumstances would permit.

"My name is Darwin Holmes. I am looking for a certain species of vampire bat—one hitherto unknown to science." He had drawn on his trousers and begun tucking in his shirt. "From the vegetation and the general appearance of this island, I thought it might here have its haunts. It is allied to the well-known Pipistrel of England—the same which by the Italians is called Pipistrelli. However, I have reason to believe that this is a large and formidable creature such as is characteristic of the tropics—in fact, one of the largest of the great genus Vampirus Spectrum. Now you must understand, my friend," he thrust first one leg and then the other into the ooze-encrusted boots that reached to his hips, "that all members of the bat kind, all the cheiropt[illegible] they insectivorous or be they c[illegible]ous, are true quadrupeds, tru[illegible]mals——"

"Oh, yes. [illegible] of the island [illegible] thusiasm respe[illegible] crous and carnivorous. [illegible] rock perilously the in[illegible] from which he spoke, send[illegible]ples circling over the lagoon.

"I guess you can come up. You don't talk as tho you meant to harm me. I like to hear you speak of bats and such. And you're from the States. I want to talk with you. Gad, [illegible] in five long, weary years."

The islander led the way; and, proceeding with the utmost difficulty, they won thru the dense undergrowth to a cleared space on the farther side.



For the first time, Darwin Holmes got a full, unobstructed view of his host. The latter had seated himself upon a stool—hewn from cottonwood—keeping the gun within easy reach.

He was thin to emaciation; hollow-cheeked, his skin of a morbid pallor—due to overlong protection from genial sunlight. His clothes—a torn shirt and ragged trousers that scarcely reached below his knees—were so tattered, so worn to shreds that, taken with his patchy, unshaven beard, he might have served as scarecrow in some Illinois cornfield.

His movements were quick and nervous—his manner of alternate excitement and dejection, giving the impression of perpetual fear—of constant apprehension of something about to happen, of some one about to come

At one side was a tiny hut thatched with broad leaves and overrun with tangled vines, in which he must have sheltered himself from rain and where he must have slept.

At the water's edge, drawn partly on the beach, was a canoe, at which, from time to time, the solitary islander glanced anxiously. In it were a blanket, kitchen utensils, and a store of food

"Not one to burn his bridges," thought Holmes. "He's evidently ready to get away on short notice.

The other was watching him as tho, distrustful, he wished to read his thought.

"From what part of the States do you come?'

"Oregon."

This reply seemed to afford immense relief. He drew a long sigh.

"Oregon? Good. Man, you don't know what it means to exist in a muddy, oozy swamp with nothing to talk to but lizards and alligators and reptiles and —ugh."

He gazed longingly at the naturalist, in his eyes the hunger for human companionship—some one with whom to talk.

Darwin Holmes looked at him pleasantly, but evidently thought it imprudent to question him.

His host crossed one knee over the other. "Did ye ever travel down Wisconsin way—down in Brown County?"

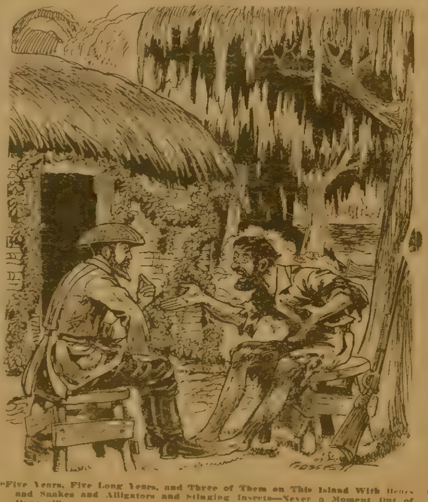
The enthusiastic student of vampire bats shook his head. "Never been farther east than Denver in my life. All of my investigations have been along the West coast and in South America."

Again upon the other's face that look of immeasurable relief

But only an instant, and it was back—that persistent, hovering distrust.

"Mebbe, tho, you're acquaitned in those parts? Mebbe you have relations or something in that neck of the woods with whom you correspond?"

The naturalist, beginning to feel more at ease with this unusual specimen of genus homo, eyed him curiously. "Seems as tho you weren't very anxious to meet with anyone from your own part of the world. No, sir, I've never been in Brown County nor do I ever expect to go there"



"Five Years, Five Long Years, and Three of Them on This Island With Bears and Snakes and Alligators and Stinging Insects—Never a Moment Out of Danger!"

The islander became buried in deep thought. At length he looked up.

"I guess you'll be all right. Anyway, if you are tricking me, I don't suppose I'll live long to regret it." Over the somber waters of the lagoon his words trailed mournfully.

"You have some worry, then? Some torturing anxiety?" Holmes sympathized

"Can I rely on you? Can you keep this interview a secret—tell not a living soul? After all, this world is small, and my whereabouts get back to——" He checked himself.

The naturalist drew from his pocket the bag of peanuts. "Shan't we munch these as we talk? Somehow it has always seemed to me that people were never truly sociable unless they were eating something."

The man, greatly agitated, thrust out his hands as tho to push away the bag, and turned his head.

"No, no; for God's sake, no. I can't bear them. Never again." He shuddered violently.

Rather sheepishly Holmes returned the peanuts to his pocket—after helping himself, however.

"Don't agree with you? Ah, but you need more vitamines, my friend. But tell me your troubles; maybe you'll feel better to get them off your—er—thorax."

Some twigs crackled. A bear lumbered into view from a clump of foliage, and splashed into the water. Unconscious of his spectators he doused himself again and again. All at once he raised his head, and perceived that he was not alone. Into the small eyes came a look of pained bewilderment. After a few minutes he ambled back into the forest.

"Five years, five long years, and three of them on this island with bears and snakes and alligators and stinging insects—never a moment out of danger Five years ago, I, Thomas Boggs, was a respectable citizen of Brown County. Oh, the smell of those d—n peanuts! Throw them away, will you?"

He jerked himself up with an air of resolution. "Yes, by Heaven, I'll tell you. I'll make a clean breast of it."

"YES, five years ago, I was a respected citizen of Brown County. There was no reason why I shouldn't be respected. I was a married man; had two lovely children," he paused and brushed a tear from his eye, "and owned my own home. And a Ford.

"It may sound boastful—egotistic—but I am telling you only what is God's truth. I was free from the ordinary vices and follies of mankind. I had no weaknesses—no regretable shortcoming at which the critical might cavil.

"Did I say no weaknesses? That is not strictly true. Alas, there was one, and, to justify myself, I must give you somewhat in detail the extenuating circumstances.

"It was baseball. Rain or shine, Sunday or week-day, if there was a ball game I couldn't stay away. Still," he added soberly, "I never let it interfere with my business, or with what I owed to my wife and children. Ask any one if I wasn't a good husband—a good father. No—no," he added hastily, "don't ask 'em.

"Perhaps, in my justification, friend, I might say our whole town was baseball mad. They had a team there—well, it was a crackerjack. Those fellows could chase themselves around a diamond for fun And they had a pitcher—Tod Whalen—who would have made Grover Alexander in his palmiest days look like a piker. And when it came to vamping a baseball bat—well, Babe Ruth should have dropped around for pointers."

At the mention of "vamp" and "bat," the naturalist started and peered into the ghostly shadows that wavered to and fro. Boggs looked at him reproachfully, then went on with history.

"That year they formed a league. There were four teams: the Jack-Rabbits, the Wolverines, the Bear-Cats, and the Tigers.

"That first season everyone went wild. Gad, I never missed a game. People began to notice me. I was a fan right. They got so they would ask me all kinds of questions—about rules, and the records of the players, percentages of won and lost, and all that. And I was just as popular with one team as with another; stood in with a Jack-Rabbit or a Wolverine just as well as with a Tiger. Yes, I became a sort of oracle to the fans—an authority to consult on all occasions.

"Ah, that was a great season. The Tigers got a bad start, I remember, and for several weeks stuck persistently to the lowest rung of the ladder.

"Then they got that pitcher I was speaking of—Tod Whalen. Our manager snaked him out of one of the Chicago leagues. He was some pitcher. Control? Well that was his middle name. There was nothing he better loved to do than to pass three men, filling the bases, then strike out three in succession.

"The Tigers began to climb.

"First they passed the Wolverines.

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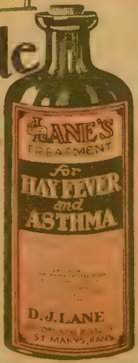

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(Continued From Page 14.)

Then, after a little slump of about two weeks, that pitcher from Chi began to strike his gait, and say, did we do a skyrocket in percentages!

"In a week they had passed the Jack-Rabbits.

"Then the fun began. They got started in a neck-and-neck race with the Bear-Cats.

"The teams were pretty evenly matched. Of course, in Tod Whalen, the Tigers had the better pitcher, and I think they had it on the Bear-Cats when it came to the infield; but the Bear-Cats were faster in base running, and better at the bat."

Again, at the word "bat," the naturalist started and gazed anxiously into the forest; then, recollecting himself, returned to respectful attention.

"For a month, things ran along just that way.

"That year they didn't play in October, but closed the season the last week in September.

"September twenty-fifth! Can I ever forget that day? Then it was that in my home town, the Tigers met the Bear-Cats in the deciding battle. How vividly it all comes back to me—the sea of faces—the boys selling pop—but most of all the smell of roasting peanuts. But I digress.

"The town was crazed with excitement."

He stopped, as tho the narration of these events pained him. His lip trembled; but, gritting his teeth as tho determined to carry on, he proceeded with the tale.

"For five innings neither side scored. Whalen's good right arm worked like machinery.

"In the sixth, the Tigers tallied one.

"Three more innings. No change.

"Then the ninth—Oh that accursed ninth inning.

"For the first time in a month, Teddy Swift let a short drive get by, putting on the bases Slip Warren, the Bear-Cats' foxiest runner. That slippery proposition worked over to third. Then Driver hit out for two bases, and Warren was able to tie the score.

"That looked bad, since the two teams were so evenly matched that there was little chance of breaking the deadlock. Nobody dreamed of what was to happen.

"Get the situation? Driver on the second sack. Two men out. Fatty Walsh to bat.

"But Whalen didn't lose his nerve. Not for a minute. But Driver, confound him, stole third.

"Whalen looked sort of grim.

"'Strike one.' The crowd went wild.

"'Ball one.' They went wilder.

"'Ball two.'

"'Ball three.'

"'Strike two.'

"Then they did go crazy."

Boggs came to a dead pause in the narrative. He passed his hand across his forehead. "I don't remember just how it happened. It's all confused in my mind. But that d——d Driver saw his chance.

"The first baseman fumbled an easy grounder—started to play catch all by himself with the intelligent expression on his face of a dog chasing his tail.

"Nobody but Driver would have been fool enough to have risked it. He made a dash for the home plate!

"The first baseman made a desperate grab—got the ball—sent it whizzing to the home plate.

"Just too late!

"Driver must have slid fifteen feet. He just made it. Safe!"

Boggs uttered the words with tragic finality. The great forest quivered into silence. Thru the thickening gloom, objects began to take on weird aspects.

The naturalist looked puzzled. He waited for the other to go on.

But Bogg rested his chin upon his hand, and gazed upon the lagoon with dull, lack-lustre eyes.

He concluded sadly:

"I umpired that game."

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COLDS

Break them up. Colds are acute catarrh and there is danger in letting them run.

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Tablets or Liquid

The White Falcon

(Continued From Page 4)

and I dispensed with him. Later I found in his room some torn pieces of letters which leads me to believe that he was not Leque a Frenchman, but Otto Sternberg a German. I did not speak of this matter because I knew it would trouble you. I am sure that he was discovered before he could do any appreciable harm, but I feared that he might be a spy. Several times since he left me, I have received proposals to purchase the plans, once, ostensibly from the French government; on another occasion one frankly on the part of friends of the Kaiser."

"Have you not feared the plane would be taken by force, or your watchmen bribed?" Allison asked.

M. Gevrol smiled. "That is impossible, Monsieur," he replied. "I have the entire shed wired, so that to touch any part of the inside walls at night would ring an alarm in my chamber, also the current would most likely be fatal to the intruder."

"It would appear then," Allison continued, after a brief silence during which the three men seemed to be struggling with some mental solution, or plan of action, "that our first move should be to discover the whereabouts of this man Leque, or Sternberg, or whatever name he now goes by. I am not familiar with the French proceedure, what do you suggest first?"

"The Prefect of the Police must be notified, and fortunately I know him well," said M. Gevrol.

"Then," said Allison, "give me a letter to him, and I will proceed to the city at once."

The letter, soon finished, was handed to the young American, and he prepared to depart. As he clasped Monsieur Moreau's hand, he promised to do everything humanly possible to bring him news of Yvonne.

ABOUT two o'clock on the afternoon on which Yvonne disappeared from the Chateau de Nesle, a dark green automobile turned out of the Rue Montmartre, and with an appearance of no great hurry, turned around numerous corners, until it reached a road which led from the city thru the porte Versailles. Besides the driver, there was one other man on the seat in front. The rear seat was occupied by a woman. It was the same who had entered the house on the Rue Nicolo, and she sat back well under the hood of the machine as if desirous of escaping attention.

The car kept on its way until it had passed the Chateau de Nesle a half league, and was surrounded by a dense wood, when the man with the driver spoke to the latter, and the car turned from the road and after a few rods stopped where it was screened from passers-by.

The man then stepped from the car, and gave a low whistle that might have been taken for a bird; this he repeated, and after a pause, another man emerged from the wood and confronted him. This man was young and fair-haired. The same, in fact, seen on Rue Nicolo.

"How is the work progressing?" the man who had left the car asked.

"Excellent," the other replied. "should nothing intervene, we shall reach our objective by tomorrow night."

"There has been no suspicion aroused?"

"No, I think not. No one has been about these woods except an occasional charcoal burner, and we have kept out of their sight."

The other stopped suddenly as he was about to say something further and cautioned his companion.

"Look," he said, "is that Mlle. Moreau?"

A young girl and an elderly woman were approaching slowly along the road.

"Yes, that it Mlle.," was the reply.

"Then luck is with us. Margot will not be compelled to go to the Chateau in order to reach the girl. She is coming to us."

He hurried back to the car and spoke to the woman, and the machine backed out to the road and turned toward the Chateau.

They reached the spot where Yvonne and Minnette entered the road. The two women appeared startled at the action of the car, but the man got out and approached them in a manner so courteous that they hesitated to fly, until it was too late. They were both seized and placed in the rear seat, but after a few moments Minnette stepped out again and set off toward the Chateau, while the car started toward the city.

Minnette hastened to tell her master of the attack on Mlle. Yvonne.

About the time Allison reached Paris, the actions of Minnette at the Chateau would have caused considerable speculation and alarm, too, perhaps to the inmates had they known of them. For as it grew dark, she slipped out of the garden at the rear, and found a dark green car which was apparently waiting for her. When she had entered, it started in the direction of Paris.

M. Lemaitre, Prefect for the Department of the Seine, was ever a busy man, but at this particular period, with his city swarming with spies, he might well have been busy had he been a superman, which indeed many supposed him to be.

Allison, instead of being shown into his presence at once, was requested to wait in an antechamber. This, too, was a place filled with motion, and throbbed with intense tho subdued energy. Allison, in spite of his impatience to be doing something for the release of the girl, who, he feared, was in dire peril, found himself becoming engrossed in watching the motly throng of human beings who were passing to and from the presence of the head of police.

There were army officers, some of whom were evidently of high rank, women bearing the impress of wealth, and those frankly of the underworld. Some slouching by seeming to see nothing but their own fears, others with the swift clear glance of the hawk. Here, as elsewhere in France, men and women felt fearful of those who rubbed elbows with them, for did it not frequently happen that the dred spy was present to see and hear, and report!

When after a quarter of an hour, he was shown into the presence of M. Lemaitre, the latter glanced up quickly and touched a bell.

"Show Monsieur to apartment four." With a courteous wave of his hand, M. Prefect motioned Allison to follow the lackey.

A short distance down a narrow hallway, his guide stopped and tapped softly on the panel of a door, which opened noiselessly. Allison entered.

The room was shaded with frosted windows, and it was a moment before Allison could distinguish the person who invited him to be seated.

Behind a green covered table was one, the very antithesis of the officer of a government's secret service. A more perfect type of the boulevardier never by any chance existed. Slightly built, with a pale patrician face, adorned with a diminutive yellow mustache, a gold rimmed monocle in one eye, and the whole ensemble finished off with clothes the most immaculate, with a boutoniere added.

He moved languidly in the big leathern chair, and tapped himself gently on the breast. "Behold M. Pitou—but you stand, Monsieur, please to be seated."

Lying before M. Pitou Allison noticed the letter which M. Gevrol had written, and which he had sent into the Prefect.

After he had seated himself, M. Pitou picked up the missive. "Now, Monsieur Allison, tell me all you know of this affair, this note explains little."

Allison at once began and under the skilful questioning of the dandified police officer, gave a fairly succinct account of what he knew of the happenings at the Chateau.

"I think I recognize this man Leque," he said when Allison had finished, "but what of Mlle. Moreau, you have not described her, Monsieur."

M. Pitou smiled as Allison attempted to give the description of the girl he loved. "You have described an angel, M. Allison," then as the other's face flushed, he waved his hands deprecatingly, "you have not dined, I assume, Monsieur, if not, suppose you now do so, go to, let us say, the Cafe Montmartre, within an hour or so, I think I may bring you news that will assure you of Mlle's safety, certainly of her present whereabouts."

It must be admitted that the American felt but little encouraged by his interview with the French sleuth, whom in his mind, he dubbed a "dude," but since there appeared nothing better to do he soon turned into the Rue Montmartre and sought the cafe suggested.

There were many persons entering along with him, and perhaps as many leaving. The main dining-room was large, but along one side and part of the rear were arranged a series of alcoves or stalls, with curtained doorways, each containing four chairs and a small table. Allison slipped into one of these, in order that he might think the better.

While awaiting the filling of his order, his attention was attracted by voices in the adjoining alcove. A woman was evidently speaking.

"We have the girl safely, Colonel," she was saying, "but we must be very careful, I followed the American, he has gone to the prefect of police."

"Bah! that for the police! stupid pigs! Haven't we been among them these months with never a suspicion?"

"I am not so sure of that, one cannot be certain what Pitou may know, until the blow falls. Herlitz was shot but yesterday, he surely appeared safe enough, as a member of the Zouave company!"

Just here the speakers lowered their voices so that Allison could not distinguish further words. Then one of the waiters [illegible] and passed into the other [illegible]. A few moments later, he heard chairs pushed back. They were leaving. He looked thru the curtains and saw a woman, tall, stately and of great beauty, of the blond type who glanced quickly at the curtains which hid him. Did she see him; he wasn't certain. Her companion was a man of thirty-five or forty, clean shaven, dark, and in his button hole a ribbon of the legion.

After a short wait Allison, too, paid his reckoning and stepped out into the street.

Someone touched him on the arm.

WHEN Allison turned at the touch on his arm, he was astonished to see that it was Minnette from the Chateau.

"What is it, Minnette? Is there more trouble?"

Minnette placed her face close to his. "Non, non, Monsieur. I come to take you to Mlle. Yvonne."

This was even more puzzling to Allison. How could this old woman whom he had left at the Chateau, know aught of her mistress.

She beckoned him to follow. At the corner she turned into Rue Favrolles and after a short walk stopped beside a car, which appeared rather dilapidated. She motions him to enter, which he did without question, the uppermost thought being that she will take him to Mlle. Moreau. Minnette gave directions to the driver which Allison did not hear, and followed him inside.

It seemed to Allison that they travelled quite a distance, but in what dicton, or the number of turns around corners, he remained in ignorance, for thru the dusty panes he discovered nothing except the street lights, and shadowy buildings. He attempted to engage Minnette in conversation, for he wished to learn that Yvonne was indeed quite safe, but she had withdrawn into a corner of the vehicle, and seemed deaf to any and all queries.

The car stopped. Minnette alighted and waited for him to follow.

Allison had assumed that they had left the business part of the city behind them, but he was not prepared for the appearance of the environment into which he had been led. The surroundings were uninviting. In an American city he would have known at once that he had entered the slums.

The streets were narrow, and incredibly gloomy, and the house before which the car had deposited him, was about the middle of a block of buildings like itself, squalid and old, the dark outlines relieved here and there where feeble lights twinkled in small windows.

Minnette, without hesitation, rapped on the door before them, which after some wait was slowly opened, and a withered face peered out at them. As the eyes of the old woman lighted on Allison, she started to close the door again, but at a sign from Minnette, she pulled it open, permitting them to enter.

Allison was far from feeling assured as he looked around, and would have withdrawn, but the door had closed behind them, and he realized that it was now too late. Second thought, too, impelled him to go on with the adventure. It was perhaps necessary for Yvonne's safety. At the moment his thoughts reverted to Pitou, who was to meet him at the Cafe Montmartre, and he wondered what that officer would think, when he discovered that he had disappeared so suddenly. It struck him that it would have been more sensible

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to have awaited his arrival before starting off, he knew not where.

A dark hall led thru the center of the house. The only light was from a small bracket lamp, hung against the wall a few feet from the door, which furnished only a feeble flare.

He followed Minnette up a flight of stairs, until he reached a small landing, even darker than the hall below, and still upward until another hall was reached.

Minnette stopped at a door which she unlocked, and stood aside for him to enter. This room was lighted by another of the bracket lamps.

Allison stepped forward eagerly, and looked around for Yvonne. The room was empty. There was a slight noise behind him, and he turned quickly. The door had closed; Minnette was no longer with him. He tried the knob. Then came a mocking laugh from the other side.

"Patience, monsieur, we will let you out anon."

The voice was not the voice of Minnette. Where had he heard it before! It came to him with startling force; it was the voice of the woman he had heard speaking to the man in the booth at the Cafe Montmartre.

The room into which he had been inveigled, was entirely bare of furniture, except for a rough couch and a couple of wooden chairs. He examined the door by which he had entered, but found the lock a strong one, unassailable with his bare hands. When he tried his shoulder against it, he realized that his efforts were useless, the lock would not yield, and the panels were thick.

Opposite the door, at the other end of the room, Allison noted a window, and he hurried over to inspect this, perhaps this would present a way of escape. But here another disappointment awaited him. The window looked out on a vacant lot, but as he glanced downward he saw that he was three stories in the air, with no visible means of descending. He imagined that he saw the river close by thru the murky atmosphere. He realized that he was caged effectually and thoroly. Without outside aid escape was impossible.

For awhile he paced back and forth, his mind busy with the problems that beset him, but tiring at last he threw himself into a chair, and strove to bring order from his chaotic thoughts. It became harder to control his nerves, as he realized that time was passing, and that the plane must be given up to the conspirators before many hours, if the safety of Yvonne was to be secured. The thought maddened him.

From where he sat Allison saw that the stars were twinkling brightly thru the window, but against the dark background he did not see that a human head appeared cautiously above the window sill. Slowly the head was followed by a body, and a man sprang lightly into the room.

Allison sat spellbound for an instant, then scenting danger, he jumped to his feet, grasps a chair and swings it above his head.

WHEN Minnette and Allison left the car at the door, they failed to see a dark figure that unrolled itself, and stepped lightly to the pavement, from its perch on the rear of the car.

While they were waiting to be let into the house, this person shrank in the shadow of the building.

When they had entered and the car had departed, the shadow disengaged and slipped into a dark alley, between the house they had entered and one next to it, and peered upward in the darkness until he saw a light appear in a window on the third floor. He then examined the rear wall of the house, and apparently satisfied with the inspection, he came out on the street again, and walked on until he found a car parked, which he entered and was driven rapidly away from that vicinity. The car stopped eventually before the Hotel de Ville, and the passenger alighted and disappeared within. Once within the building, the personage showed no indecision, but walked rapidly along the corridor until he reached the door thru which Allison had earlier in the evening had his interview with Pitou.

The man hung his overcoat on a peg behind the door, and threw his soft hat on the table. It was Pitou, himself.

He busied himself with some papers which had been placed there probably during his absence, but appeared to be listening for some sound from without. A half hour elapsed before his keen ear caught the light sound of approaching footsteps. He thrust the papers in a drawer and waited.

When the door opened a woman entered, but she, too, was concealed with wraps and a heavy veil.

When she threw the veil aside, the woman of the Cafe Montmartre and of the house in Rue Nicoli was revealed.

She was strikingly beautiful in a blond way, tho now pale and seemingly under strong emotion, and glanced about her as tho she feared something these walls might hide. Finally she said:

"You sent for me?"

Pitou took out the papers he had dropped in the drawer on her entrance.

"I wanted to ask you," Pitou said slowly, "if you could tell me anything of Margot Douay, of Rheims?"

The face of the woman grew paler, and her reply was hesitant. "No," she answered.

Pitou smiled slightly, "I didn't know, but that you could help me, your name is Margot, too, and I should think that you were very like that other Margot."

He paused a moment. "I have a letter from a soldier out there in the trenches of Verdun, who asks me to find Margot Douay. I do not know his name, but the letter is signed, Moulin Rouge."

The woman sprang to her feet with a gasp, "That name!" she cried, "that name'"

"Moulin Rouge," Pitou repeated.

It was evident that this name had a terrible effect on the woman. She was evidently near a collapse.

After a moment she sank into a chair and covered her face with her hands. Pitou waited.

Presently she looked up, and her eyes flashed from the palid face.

"I have given you information at times of dangerous strangers in Paris, but there are some I have never named. From now on, I shall strive to undo the arch spy of all." She rose and threw her veil over her face. Pitou waited quietly as she passed thru the door and left him alone. Then he lit a cigarette and murmured one word, "Good."

BEFORE Allison had time to bring the chair down, the intruder threw up his hands, "Stop, Monsieur, it is I, Pitou."

But for the voice, the figure that confronted Allison in this startling manner, would never have been recognized as that of the detective. Instead of the immaculately attired boulevardier of the Prefect's apartments, before him was a swarthy individual in a much worn suit of smoke color.

"How in the name of all that's wonderful did you get in here?" Allison asked.

Pitou took him to the window, and pointed to a water flue running up beside the window, then he said:

"I was just about to enter the Cafe Montmartre when I saw you leave, and before I could accost you, the woman had reached you first, and when you entered the car, I jumped up behind to see where you were being taken. After you had entered I reconnoitered and found out which room you were taken to. I intended entering in these clothes, but feared I might be recognized, and there are many below who would find pleasure in the sudden death of Pitou, I can assure you, so I was compelled to come as I did."

"What place is this," Allison inquired in surprise.

"The headquarters of the Apaches of Paris, the most dangerous place in Paris."

"Then Mlle. Moreau is probably not here," and Allison gave Pitou a quick account of his reason for accompanying the woman

Pitou replied that no doubt she was there in another part of the building, or the one adjoining, for he explained there are said to be numerous tunnels between these houses, to enable the criminals to escape when the police raided the place, which sometimes happened.

Pitou threw away his cigarette. "Come we must find Mlle. Moreau before my men arrive, else she may be spirited away."

The detective turned to the door, and with his skeleton keys soon had it open. Without hesitation as to direction he started down the hall, and listening at the first door, he took out his keys again.

When the door swung slowly open, Allison's heart almost stopped beating, for fear that the room should not contain the one he sought, or should contain those whom it were dangerous to encounter.

They were in luck, near a window sat Yvonne, while near her stood Minnette.

Yvonne gave a glad cry, when she turned at the noise made by the door, and saw who it was. The two lovers

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were soon clasped in each others arms, while Pitou looked on smiling.

When the first transports were over, Allison bethought himself of the trick Minnette had played upon him.

"Why did you lock me in that other room, after promising to lead me to your mistress?" he asked.

"I led you, Monsieur? I have not seen you since leaving the Chateau. I have not left this room since entering it."

In surprise he turned to Yvonne, "It is quite true," she answered, "she has not left me a moment."

"Perhaps I can explain, this matter, M. Allison," put in Pitou. "It was not Minnette who brought you here, but Margot Desplaines, who is under suspicion as an agent of the Germans. She is an adept at disguising herself, and may be seen in many characters. What I imagine happened was this, when Mlle. Moreau was abducted by her confederates, she made up as Minnette and it was undoubtedly she who carried the note to the Chateau. This would be a good plan by which to learn what measures would be taken for her rescue. We shall probably learn, that she did not remain there long after your departure."

"If she is dangerous as a spy, why have you not arrested her ere this?" Allison asked in astonishment.

"Ah!" the other answered, "we let many such go at liberty for a time, or until they can be no further use to us, they are sometimes valuable. Mlle. Margot's letters to the head of Berlin's spy system, are charming and I read them with interest. Unfortunately," Pitou added, with a sigh, "some day we shall have to arrest Margot."

While they were talking, Pitou appeared to be listening for some sound beyond the door, and now as he paused the dull sound of peremptory knocking on the outer door below filtered up to them. Then for some minutes all was silent, and after a bit the knocking was renewed. Another pause, a crash of splintering wood and the rush of many feet.

"The gendarmes have come," Pitou said as the others looked to him for explanation.

Scarcely had he finished speaking, when their door was thrown open, and Allison saw the woman of the Cafe Montmartre, behind her crowded four or five men.

"Come," she cried, "we must get out of this—" she stopped short with a sharp intake of breath, as she noted the presence of the two men. Pitou stepped forward.

"Not so fast, Margot, we shall await my police, then we will accompany you."

Margot fell back against the wall behind her, as she recognized the voice of the speaker. She gazed at him with dilated eyes, "Pitou," she exclaimed in a tense whisper.

At her exclamation her companions faded away from the doorway, for the name of Pitou is known and feared by the underworld of Paris, even the Apaches grow timid at his name.

As they stood thus for a moment in tense waiting, another man pushed to the front. Allison recognized the man he had seen with the woman in the cafe. A pistol flashed in Pitou's hand: "Hands up, M. Von Linden," he said sternly. As the other obeyed, a shot rang out, and the lamp against the wall crashed to the floor and went out.

ALL was in darkness for a brief period, then a light flashed along the hall, and five gendarmes dashed into the room.

"After them," cried Pitou, and with him in the lead they dashed down the stairs and thru the rooms and halls until they brought up against a heavy wooden door. When they had pried this open, they saw, not the street as they might have supposed, but a dark tunnel leading to they knew not where. It appeared foolish to follow the fugitives.

Leaving the police to search the rooms further, Pitou rushed up stairs again, and called to Allison and the two women to hurry down that they might get away. He was turning from the door to descend, when a ball of paper dropped at his feet. No one was in sight, tho he looked all about him ere he picked it up.

When he opened out a small sheet of thin paper, he gave a startled exclamation:

> **Fly to the Chateau, the plane is to be secured tonight or blown up. The ground is tunnelled and mined, the entrance is here.**

There was a roughly drawn tree, on a diagram showing the woods in the rear of the Chateau garden.

Pitou pushed this strange note into Allison's hands, and calling them to follow dashed down stairs and into the street. A large touring car was waiting for the police, and the whole party crowded into the machine, with Pitou at the wheel, and began a mad ride thru the outskirts of the city and out into the country on the road to the Chateau.

At a sharp curve, Allison took the opportunity the slowing up of the car gave, to put a question which had been puzzling him.

"Where did that warning note come from," he asked Pitou.

"Margot, but I had already suspected what might result from our raid tonight, in case any of the gang escaped. Von Linden, the man who has been posing as a French officer of the Legion of Honor, is a German flying ace, sent here for the especial purpose of capturing Gevrol's machine. In case of failure it was to be destroyed if possible. I did not, of course, know that they had gone to the trouble of tunnelling under the chateau's garden."

"But," Allison said, "I thought the woman Margot, was a German spy, why should she assist you?"

"That's another story, and too long to recount now, but she is out with them. In fact they held over her, the threat of death to her lover, and she has learned of his safety. He was supposed to be a prisoner, when as a fact he is at the front near Verdun."

The car drew up in front of the chateau for the women to get out and then sped on past the shed and a few hundred yards along the road, where the men alighted

Allison had accompanied them, being anxious to see what might happen. His head was in a whirl of conflicting thoughts. It seemed unreal the kaleidoscopic changes that had been rung in the past twenty-four hours. What a maze of intricate occurrences had enmeshed him since he had accepted the post of piloting the great airplane. After a short wait they were joined by other of the gendarmes, whom Pitou had instructed to follow after searching the house.

After they had penetrated the wood a hundred yards they could see the shadowy outlines of the sheds to the chateau, and a few words of instructions sent the men to stations pointed out by their leader as places of possible vantage. Allison glanced at his watch and noted that it was nearly 3 o'clock. A few minutes, and the rustling of the dead leaves advised them that footsteps were approaching cautiously. Presently a group of five men became indistinctly visible as they slipped thru the trees. Not more than ten feet from where Pitou and Allison were posted was a tree trunk that had been long dead, its naked limbs stretching upward in the shadows on the one side, and the other half broken and hanging downward. The new comers stopped when they reached this tree and struck a lucifer carefully and lighted a lantern.

This appeared suddenly to be blown out, and when the eyes of the watchers became accustomed to the darkness, the men had disappeared. Pitou gave a low whistle and rushed to the spot, where the others quickly joined him. A gaping aperture in one side of the gnarled trunk showed where the men had gone.

Pitou had only time to step into this opening when there came a blinding flash seemingly from the roots under their feet, followed by a rush of men thru the opening with afrightened cries, and the gendarmes seized them as they came, until they held five prisoners. Before they could question them, Allison caught sight of a sixth man behind them, who was hastening away. Pitou saw him at the same time and dashed after him. He came back after five minutes alone

"Von Linden has escaped," he stated tersely.

When they reached the Chateau with their prisoners, they found all in excitement. The explosion had been heard and M Gevrol had been badly frightened for his machine. Explanations were made and the party proceeded cityward accompanied by Allison.

The prisoners were for the most part young men, and without doubt belonged to that dangerous portion of the Parisian underworld labeled Apaches, and tho barely realizing the dangerous predicament in which they found themselves as traitors to their native land, were downcast at the outcome of the adventure, the success of which was to bring them much gold to spend in their favorite cabarets. They were unable to explain the explosion, except that it was premature. They had been instructed that the mine was only to be resorted to as a last extremity. It was not until an hour later that the true explanation was forthcoming. Allison had accompanied Pitou to his office, and they had spent the time in discussing the night's occurrences, when the door opened and the mysterious Margot appeared again. As she removed her veil it was seen that she was pale, and that her hair had been burned away at the forehead, and there were a few streaks of soot across her cheek.

To Pitou's look of surprise, she hastened to explain what had happened to her. It was she who had preceded the Von Linden party with intentions to balk them in their attempt at the airplane.

She had only time to cut the fuses that extended under the shed, when she heard the men approaching. Then she had hurriedly placed one of the bombs near the opening and lighted the fuse, and hastened to the other end of the tunnel. But even so the flareback had almost proved fatal to her, and had scorched her clothing and hair. She also gave the information that attempts on the plane were undoubtedly over for the present, as Von Linden, the arch plotter, had already left Paris.

"Since he is gone, what will you do?" Pitou asked when she had finished. She admitted that she did not know.

Pitou drew a pad to him and wrote a few lines thereon, and handed it to her.

"The bearer is a member of the secret police of France," she read in surprise.

"Well?" Pitou asked, as she looked at him.

"Thank you, monsieur," she replied simply, "I shall serve faithfully."

When she had gone, Allison asked if Pitou could trust her. Pitou smiled. "Most certainly, an injured woman has all the tenacity of a tigress. Von Linden had deceived her into obedience thru a threat that her lover was a prisoner and that his safety depended on her loyalty to Berlin. She has learned this was false, thru a letter which I showed her."

Two days after these occurrences, in the early morning, those at the Chateau were gathered to watch the White Falcon take its maiden flight. The young American had spent a half hour among the roses of the old garden, while M. Gevrol and his werkmen were dismantling the shed, and the long lashes of Mlle. Yvonne were wet at the parting that had come.

When all was ready, Allison climbed in, and examined the levers. Then there was a great whirring sound as the propellers made their first revolution, and the giant birdlike structure rose lightly into view from behind the walls of the shed, and shot upward thru the cool air and bright sunshine and appeared to float as a wide-winged bird with glistening pinions. Only for a moment the pauses—then its nose pointed almost straight upward—it sprang forward in a spiral climb until it was but a shining atom among the fleecy clouds.

As the watchers waited breathlessly, a brilliant sword of light pierced the filmy white, wavered a moment, then struck a plot of dry grass and debris just without the wall. A wisp of smoke floated upward, followed by tongues of flame. It was Allison's au revoir.

M. Gevrol turned a glowing face on the others. "It works; it is a great day. I must tell M. Moreau!"

VERDUN will forever enliven the duller pages of history that shall be written of the great war. The surrounding hills and villages, it may be, will be less known, but these comprise the real gems with which Verdun will shine. Hill 340, le Morte Homme, Fleury Vaux, and Souville, and it was because they stood in the way, that Verdun lived thru those parlous days.

The sun rose over the nearer hills, and glinted in and out the narrow streets and shattered houses of Vaux one Sunday morning in June; it was brilliantly warm as became a sun appearing on a perfect day in that month. As the mists and the smoke from smouldering fires lifted under a gentle breeze, it brought into relief the tortuous main street of the village and the lines of trenches and barricades which war had brought into being, and had been busy trying to demolish during many months. Vaux, which had for ages struggled thru a sleepy existence, was now gashed and torn, a whole roof was a curiosity, and the windows had long since become but empty sockets from which the eyes had been torn The earth was twisted into strange uncouth shapes already, but each moment the huge shells from the enemy's guns beyond the hills descended, and the air was filled with dust and debris, and sometimes a scarlet stream crept slowly along the crushed earth in their wake.

France, hard pressed on all sides, had only a single battalion to spare for Vaux, and that had been woefully decimated. Those left were haggard wrecks of men, so covered with dust and grime that all resemblance to living animals was almost obliterated. From early March they had been there. They would stay until they were blasted away, or relieved. They had almost ceased to indulge in any hope of this latter contingency. General Petain had said: "They shall not pass!" The men of Vaux felt that it was true. At least their part was to make it so.

Toward afternoon of this June day, came a lull—the enemy had tired of firing at them without response, and men began to crawl from out the trenches and from behind barricades to get a bit of air and rest. The silence was so strange as to be oppressive, the light breeze from the south swept away the acrid smell of burned ammunition, and the bright splendor of the sun was tempered with a fleecy fretwork of cloud drifting by. Even a stray bird dropped upon a rampart and twittered its astonishment. War seemed to have left Vaux and its environs to its siesta.

Near an angle of a parapet overlooking the hills beyond which the enemy lay, Henri Jervais threw himself down on the dusty sward, beside Les Moulins Rorge, the latter so called from a shock of fiery red hair and beard. A veritable giant of a man he was, recklessly brave, jovial and popular, and a sergeant of whom the men felt considerable awe, and even the officers respected

"Hot work, mon lieutenant," he greeted Jervais, "will they leave us time to breathe a bit of air, do you think?"

"I hope so," the other replied, "I am all in." Gervais looked it. His was the delicate physique of the Parisian, to whom fatigue had been a stranger until the war began.

Red Moulin assented to the hope, then jumping suddenly to his feet strode rapidly across the narrow street, and reaching up pulled a dapper little fellow from the top of the barricade, just as a shell came screaming over and fell with a thud beyond them.

"Hey!" he shouted as he turned the other around to face him, "What do you mean by starting them up again! Think it's funny to make a target out of yourself. Want to dance the ballet up there for them, do you? Scat out of this!"

The men around them laughed heartily at the disconcerted countenance of the youthful officer. It was long since they had laughed, but the situation was humorous, and the victim joined them.

"I wished to see what was going on, over there," he explained. Moulin looked at him solemnly, and shook his head.

"Only two officers left, and he wants

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to get himself killed, these boys, these boys," he said despondently.

Their afternoon siesta was destined to be of short duration, for the red giant had barely time to return to his recumbent posture beside Gervais, ere the artillery opened up again, the air throbbed with the screaming shells, then came the sharp rattle of machine guns nearer at hand, and the defenders of Vaux hastened to shelter. It was evident that they were in for an assault. Heretofore they had beat them off, again they would do their best.

Presently at the foot of the hill on which Vaux was perched, the seried ranks of gray-coated Germans debouched into view, they had been hidden in the edge of Gaillette Wood. The French guns began to roar in reply, the tired men forgot fatigue, and began to sing the Marseillaise under the urging of Moulins, whose voice arose above the chorus like the bellow of a megaphone. In a few minutes the advancing gray horde would be at their barricade. Suddenly the northern end of the street became infested with the invaders, and a chill struck the heart of Gervais. Must he fall at last. Red Moulins staggered past him to another trench, a living stream mingling with the matted hair, his hat gone, carried away by a blast of shrapnel, that had gashed his head. Most of the defenders were down, the long struggle at Vaux appeared to have been in vain.

Gervais had raised his hand to tell those left to desist, when he was astounded to see the invaders pause, and then begin to run about in circles. They were retreating in a panic, and stranger yet, they were throwing aside their hats, some falling apparently lifeless, others tumbling into the trenches from which his men had been driven but a short while before, and above all other sounds rose cries of mortal terror. As he watched the astonishing scene, tongues of flame leaped out here and there among the ruins. What was the meaning of it.

Red Moulins had come to Gervais' side and was gazing upward. "See," he cried, pointing with a trembling finger.

Gervais' gaze followed the pointing finger. Flying high up against the blue dome was a white airplane, from which glinting rays of fire appeared to be shooting into the ranks of their enemy.

As the thoroly demoralized German hosts rushed pell-mell out of Vaux and down the sides of the hill, the searing rays followed playing its stream of lurid light now here, now there, and men were throwing up their hands and falling, to lie prone and still or to crawl into the doubtful cover of the singed and burning undergrowth. The few survivors on the hill of stricken Vaux broke out into a joyful cheer. It was inexplicable, but they were saved, at least for the time.

The second and concluding installment of this thrilling war story will appear in next week's Ledger. It is full of the heroic action which marked the great war and it has in it the daring adventures of brave women who love brave men. Be sure to read the final installment.

* * *

It Was According.

"Boy," said the man standing on the City Hall steps, "will you do an errand for me for ten cents?"

"That's according," said the boy as he turned around.

"What has according got to do with it?" asked the man.

"Why, if it is worth a dollar I am not going to do it for ten cents," said the boy as he loafed across the street.

* * *

None.

"I try to mind my own business."

"Well, there's no law against being eccentric, old scout."

The French Frock

By Laura Reid Montgomery

JIM touched the misty golden hair with adoring fingers. "You are wonderful, sweetheart. I do not need to know of your fine old family connections to know that you are honor itself; one glance into those true eyes dispels any ideas of secrets. Above all else I adore you for your frankness."

And then, even as he smiled into her wide blue eyes, he saw the color slowly drain from the small face and instantly the curling lashes fell and hid the frightened expression that had clouded them.

A snatch of gay music floated down to them from the ballroom that occupied the entire top floor of the magnificent home in The Drive but the lilting strain brought no pleasure to the girl who had, but a few moments before, been in a daze of delight. "Why," she began with a confusion that he could not fail to note, "why do you speak of secrets?"

"Why not?" he countered, but she saw that his mouth had grown stern and hard.

Mary could never remember how she got thru the remaining hours of the dance that she had looked forward to so eagerly. Wonderingly her partners gazed at her soft white face where no trace of color remained and felt piqued at her lack of response to their gay banter.

Sadie, Mary's step-sister, seemed to enjoy herself immensely and her black eyes were filled with scorn as she noticed the fear that was unmistakably limned on the girlish features.

"What's the matter?" she whispered, "you look as tho you were afraid of something."

Mary's tiny white hand unclenched and she touched her costly gown with a gesture of disgust. "I am frightened," she confessed, "how I wish I had never worn——"

Paul Graves, office-manager where Mary and her sister worked had approached and caught the faint words before the older girl had stopped her with a significant shake of her sleek black head. Looking closely at the confused face he smiled persuasively. "Dance this with me, Mary."

Jim, coming back with the ice for Mary, heard her answer.

"I have this with Jim."

A scowl replaced the smile and Sadie, catching it, spoke suddenly: "Dance with him, Mary, I'll explain to Jim," and Jim saw her press the girl's hand meaningly.

Mary, unaware that her lover stood almost at her elbow, complied and Sadie smiled up gaily into Jim's brooding face. "Girls are all alike," she murmured, "we change our minds as easily as we do our frocks and——"

Jim laughed shortly "I can scarcely believe that you'd come under that indictment. Blondes are said to be fickle but I rather fancied that Mary liked to dance with me."

The melting eyes of the beautiful brunette flattered him more than her words. "I like to dance with you altho you seldom——"

Jim held out his arms and they danced out into the throng of merry-makers. "Tell me," he said after a time, "is there anything wrong with Mary's frock? She touched it as tho——"

Sadie lifted her satiny head that she had unthinkingly permitted to rest upon his shoulder and a wave of perfume was wafted to him by the movement. "Mary is such a child," she excused, a trace of embarrassment in her manner, "mother often worries about her because she is so fond of clothes and doesn't care —that is—" she checked herself with a quick glance up into the dark face—"she cannot be blamed for liking money altho I—" sighing she left her sentence incomplete.

"Mary wore a beautiful gown tonight, my mother spoke of it," said Jim. "I fancied that Mary cared nothing for money or fine homes."

Sadie's amused laugh conveyed many things. "Oh, well," she murmured, "we can discuss Mary any time and this music is heavenly. What are you going to do tomorrow night?"

He started for he had been moodily remembering just what he had planned for that time. "I am going," he said gloomily, "to call upon your mother. That is why," he added, "I feel so amazed at your sister's action in cutting a dance with me. I proposed to her tonight."

Sadie's black lashes rested upon her scarlet cheeks and the man, looking down at her, could read nothing from her face. "Oh," burst out Sadie, gasping, "oh, what a pity. If you had only waited—" then, as tho enveloped with shame at her involuntary admission, she closed firmly her full red lips and danced on slowly, refusing to reply to the questions he asked.

Meanwhile, Mary, clasped in the arms of the man whom she had always disliked, revolved the events of the evening in her mind. She had started out with such happy anticipation only to find her house of dreams falling down about her with such haste as to confuse her. Sadie with her odd whispers and apprehensive manner, Jim looking at her with somber eyes that had, heretofore, been filled with the love-light that had filled her consciousness with incredulous joy. And, lastly, Paul, with his possessive clasp that made her shudder and his light eyes burning down at her triumphantly.

"You have not known this Jim Avery very long, but you seem to be pretty good friends," said Paul.

The golden head nodded. In fact, Mary was afraid to trust her voice.

"But," continued that smooth tone that she hated, "you let me cut in on his dance. That was good of you, Mary, and, perhaps, I'll let you take Sadie's place as my private secretary ——"

"No, no, let Sadie keep it; you see I shall not be working much longer because——"

A burst of handclapping demanding yet another encore of the popular dance drowned her words and Sadie came up to them.

"Mary, dear," she murmured, "I feel very faint and I'll have to go home. Run and get your wraps while I make our excuses to Mrs. Avery."

"But," protested Mary, "Jim is going to drive us home himself and the ball is not half over"

Again the odd warning flashed the signal to the little blond girl who watched her sister's face with terrified blue eyes. "I tell you we must go at once. If I see Mr Avery I'll tell him, but——" her words were lost as she hurried away and Paul silently hurried Mary to the ladies' cloak room.

THE drive home was a silent affair. Mary looking at the faces of Paul and Sadie could hardly believe hat this was the ending of the long-looked-for night. Paul trying to make love to her and Sadie sitting back in her corner gazing out with bitter, contemptuous eyes and mouth set in lines of anger, sleet beating against the glass of Paul's car, and Jim somewhere angrily aloof.

"Dream of me, little one," whispered Paul, lifting her down and holding her a moment, "don't struggle to get away like that, perhaps I'll give you that raise ——"

But Mary, shaking herself free, had sped across the snowy sidewalk and up the steps of the apartment building.

"She's a spirited little woman," laughed Paul, but Sadie saw the ugly lines about his thin lips and shuddered as he continued, "don't forget my orders unless you wish to act."

"And now," Mary had already flung aside her soft cloak and scarf, "tell me what all this means."

Sadie stole a look at herself in the mirror as she permitted her costly squirrel wrap to slide back from her bare shoulders. "Don't put on the baby-act," she requested coldly, "it means that we have been found out and that Paul can put me in prison if he wishes——"

Mary's scream was only half uttered, for her sister sprang across the small room and placed an ungentle hand across the soft pink lips.

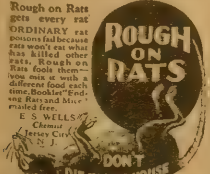
"Of course," Sadie's tone implied utter disbelief, "you really believed what I told you. It seemed better to keep up the pretense even when we were alone because if mother happened to hear anything she would be none the wiser and she's so fussy——" here Sadie stopped to laugh as her sister sprang up—"no, she's not fussy. She's as wonderful as you think or pretend to think she is, but, nevertehless, I'm in a mess, and it's up to you to help me out. Did you tell Jim where you got that gown?"

"Oh," wept Mary, "if only I had worn my white net as I had planned to do—no, I didn't tell him and it spoiled everything." Tears rained down and the golden head bowed itself in utter misery.

"Well," went on Sadie, coldly, "I think that Paul knew all the time that I had been taking the money that customers——"

Mary's tears were arrested at this and her face assumed a white masklike expression. "You took money?" she demanded.

"Oh, yes, little plaster-saint, I took it. Nobody handed it to me on a gilt-platter and smirked at me. The world owes me something and I propose to get it. I'm young and beautiful, but what is that? The girl who can't wear costly gowns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and have her hair properly dressed stands no show. I——" she stretched her bare arms above her satiny black head and admired herself in the glass shamelessly. "Look as well groomed as any deb from the Gold Coast, but it all costs something."

"Sadie, will you stop beating around the bush and tell me exactly what you mean?" Something in the hard voice arrested Sadie and stirred, momentarily, a feeling of pity for the white-faced girl opposite whose voice had lost something in that moment, youth, perhaps. "Yes," agreed Sadie, shortly, "I will. You know that while you were satisfied to drudge away at that infernal office month after month for barely enough to run this flat that I wasn't. We were both as pretty as the other girls who went about constantly and had all the good things of life, but——" Sadie's mouth grew hard and calculating—"they had the clothes and we didn't. I told you I intended to turn something over and I did, and look at us now. We wear the best that can be bought, go out every night and meet men who will, eventually, marry us and lift us forever from this hateful poverty that stifles all life and——"

Mary stopped her with a brief gesture. "Keep to the subject, please," she said with that new strained note of authority, "you have had all these good things. Remember that I didn't profit by your sharpness. I——" suddenly overwhelmed by the disaster that had wrested her youth and love from her she sank into stony silence.

"True, but you might just as well for you'll have to help me out now," said the other calmly, "there's a way out without any trouble. Paul loves you and wants to marry you and he'll replace what I took to please you. That's simple."

OUTSIDE a cab clattered with shrieking gears and the sound seemed to strip all sensation from the listener's heart. From Sadie's point of view the situation was unpleasant but not necessarily tragic. With Mary safely married to Paul, Sadie would go scot free and be in a better position to stalk a rich man than before. Like some trapped animal Mary gazed around the shabby living-room. Her mother's glasses lay upon her worn Bible and they brought instantly the tender face of the older woman before her. Sadie was not her own daughter, merely the step-child who had received exactly the same love as had Mary but, where Sadie had merely a careless affection for her step-mother, Mary—it seemed a weary circle with no outlet to Mary who had not yet dared let herself think of the strict, determined man whom she had promised to marry only a few hours previously.

Sadie yawned. "Now you know it all. Be a good child and marry Paul and we're all right. Too bad you let that Jim Avery make a fool of himself over you but it doesn't matter much. If he hears a whisper of theft he would never speak to you again."

Mary buried her face in her hands. This was the end of her love. For months she had seen Jim's growing attachment and she had gone about her duties in a happy trance that had made her almost oblivious to Sadie's methods. Love had bemused her and had so clouded her sense of values that she had believed the specious arguments employed by the older girl and had merely warned Sadie that she would become accustomed to the rich garments she continually wore and miss them when they became no longer available. To this Sadie had flung gay challenges and had continued her way.

Jim was an upright man with an intense horror of anything secret and Mary, entangled in her girlish dreams of the golden future, had given Sadie's bizarre scheme for bettering her condition no place in her mind of late. Sadie had her own life to live and Mary felt reasonably certain that once the petulant beauty succeeded in establishing herself well she would fling off her family connections with scant ceremony. But life was not such a simple affair after all. Sadie had not only disgraced herself and fallen into the clutches of the law but she was dragging her family after her. Sadie's father had been of the same disposition, affable and gay when he had his own way, but tricky and irresponsible when crossed; that was why Mrs. Crane was doing her own work in a shabby apartment while her two girls went daily to work, her husband had not only run thru with the fortune left by Mary's father but he had also left debts, debts of honor that the scrupulous widow had satisfied at the expense of her own comfort.

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"Jim—what did he say when you told him we must go home?" demanded Mary brokenly.

"Don't think of him," Sadie spoke sympathetically and the other winced; evidently Jim was still nursing his anger over the divided dance.

"When did Paul learn of your—that is——"

Sadie pulled out the pins that confined her hair. "Tonight. He went over the books at the office after we all went home. It's lucky for us that he's taken a fancy to you, otherwise——"

Mary's cheeks grew rose-red: "Why," she cried spiritedly, "do you continually class me with you? I took no money, bought no fine clothes—had no wretched secrets that make me ashamed to look into Jim's eyes."

The black eyes that had so meltingly gazed at the rich Jim Avery now sparkled with satisfied malice as one slim hand pointed at the white silk gown sparkling with jeweled embroideries. "Didn't the good little sister fall finally and didn't she wear the beautiful gown so that she would find favor in the sight of the rich man? Did Jim Avery propose to you before he saw you wearing this frock that set off your insipid white-and-gold beauty?" All the rancor of years crept into the words; Sadie had always been jealous of the other's pure white loveliness and she rejoiced in the horror that was devastating Mary's soul.

With a gesture of ineffable loathing Mary began unhooking her gown. It was true—in the main—Sadie always had enough truth in her prevarications to bewilder her sister. Sadie had brought the frock home and had unfolded the tissue-papers, disclosing to her beauty-loving eyes the almost incredible loveliness of the filmy silks and fairylike embroideries. Pearl-encrusted gold with a spray of jeweled flowers for the misty golden hair, golden slippers with sheer silken hose to match, even the great fan of white feathers curling sumptuously above the slender golden stick; nothing had been omitted that would tempt her. Mary recalled the scene and remembered Sadie's gay trill of laughter as she stood comparing the two gowns. One, homemade and of a simple prettiness; white net over silk-mull with a childish blue sash—the other a French creation with long fringes of pearls that seemed to tangle up her sense of values. She recalled, with a dull anguish, how she had hesitated, fearing that she might be unwomanly in thus decking herself that her lover might find her beautiful. That Jim loved her she had been certain of, but she had the feminine desire, bequeathed by Eve, for admiration from the man she worshiped. Sadie had sneered at her scruples, and even her mother had approved of wearing the gown that Sadie had tempted her with, but then, neither of them had clearly understood the situation.

With a meticulous care Mary folded the gown and replaced it in the long white box. "Sadie," she said at last, "I cannot give up Jim. I love him too well."

Bleakly her voice sounded in the still room. There were blue shadows beneath the eyes that had sparkled with joy a few hours before.

And then Sadie grew really frightened. Regardless of the flame-colored chiffons that had been obtained at such a cost, she flung herself down upon her knees and caught at the tiny feet still encased in the golden slippers. "Mary, Mary, my sister, you wouldn't let them take me to jail? I know it is all my fault, but I love beauty so. Paul is a hard man—I believe he knew all the time that I was taking money and he let me go on until I got myself into the net. I thought I'd marry well and put the money back, I have the books fixed so carefully that—oh, Mary, have pity on me. Look at me and think of me in a dirty cell with rats——" her terror mounted and with a sobbing sigh white flecks appeared upon her distorted mouth and she fell over in a swoon.

And Mary gave up her youth then before the altar of pity. She must do what she could to repair Sadie's sin and far into the night she sat trying to write her letter of farewell to her lover.

THE day dragged its interminable length at the office and Mary wondered sadly if she would always go about with a stone taking the place of the heart that had used to beat tumultously with the very joy of living. Sadie had spent nearly an hour taking dictation from Paul, and had whispered to Mary when she at last came out from the private office that everything was all right.

With throbbing temples Mary bent over her desk. What Sadie called "all right" spelled desolation for her and what she read in Paul's eyes as he lingered near her desk later on filled her with a sick fear of the future

"Come into my office, please," ordered Paul, after luncheon.

With flaming cheeks and downcast eyes Mary picked up her notebook and pencil. Scarcely aware of what she did she pressed upon the desk until the point snapped.

"Take mine," whispered Sadie, pressing another pencil into her cold hand, "he hates to be kept waiting. That wealthy Jack Melton called up just now. I'm going to dine at the Blackstone with him."

"You might just as well have been nice to me months ago, little one," greeted Paul, bold eyes smiling at her confusion, "what I want I always take, even as you took what you wanted with your pretty thieving white hands. I just waited and you walked into the net blindly. When Jim Avery calls at your shabby walk-up flat tonight to ask the poor widow for her white ewe lamb, he'll get the jolt of his life. The poor fish, to think——"

The golden head lifted indignantly. "We'll just leave Mr. Avery out of this. You know that I don't love you."

The light eyes blazed suddenly at her. "But I love you and that's enough. I'll sit and laugh tonight when Avery puffs in——"

"I have already written Mr. Avery telling him——"

An odd expression flitted over the flat, pale face. "Telling him what?" he began, harshly, but at that moment the office boy entered.

"I can't see anyone, Ed; go away!"

"But it's Mr. Avery and——"

Paul laughed harshly. "Get out," he ordered and pulled Mary down to his knee before the door had closed after the boy.

Fiercely the girl struggled, her forehead wet with a cold perspiration.

"My sweet little thief," gibed Paul, leaning down to press his mouth to the pink lips that were stiff with distaste.

There was a muttered curse as he heard the door open and he pushed Mary away and arose to see the head of the firm standing before him with Jim Avery and another man.

"I am not at all pleased with the goings on here," said the head sternly, "Mr. Gordon is here to audit the books."

Jim looked down searchingly into the white face of his fiancee. "Why didn't you trust me, Mary?"

She buried her face in her hands and Paul chose that moment to move carelessly toward the door.

"Just as I thought," barked the head, "there's an officer in the outer office waiting for you, Paul. When this little girl here wrote that she had stolen from the firm I decided to see how you had feathered your nest. Quite well, apparently, from your haste to leave."

An hour later Jim was alone in the private office with Mary. Sadie had, with a rare burst of honesty, confessed that Mary had known nothing of her thefts and had, after being assured that Paul could not harm her, disclosed other matters of interest.

"If you had only told me," repeated Jim tenderly, looking at the drawn face with the blue shadows brought by her night of terror at the thought of marrying Paul.

Mary leaned against the strong arm that enfolded her. "Why, you see I never dreamed there were any secrets between us," she murmured, "until you said the word at the ball——"

Jim looked puzzled: "But you'd been wearing the expensive clothes for months," he remonstrated.

She in her turn seemed perplexed: "It is all a muddle. You see when Sadie started out to turn things over Paul suggested that she go to see a modiste that he knew. This woman, Madame Rosalia, told Sadie that she would furnish us with gowns to wear out evenings provided we would mention her name when the clothes were mentioned. She said the advertisement would pay for the clothes because of our——"

"Beauty," he supplied gravely, "go on."

"I didn't care for the idea and refused, but Sadie, poor girl, she was so eager for beautiful things that she accepted."

"Then, after she had been wearing them for months Madame Rosalia suddenly sent in an enormous bill and so frightened Sadie that she helped herself to the money that Paul had left conveniently easy for her," went on Jim, repeating what Sadie had told to the head in the presence of Paul who had listened in a sullen silence, denying nothing.

Mary nodded.

"When I got your letter I knew there was something fishy in the affair. Paul intended to make a tool of Sadie so that if the books were examined before he was ready for the auditor he would lay all the blame on her. He had her so afraid of jail that she persuaded you to marry him."

From the outer office came Paul's voice. "I tell you I will make good the money, I have plenty. It was all a plan to get that white-faced little fool who had to go and write that letter just as I had everything ready."

"That letter saved the day," laughed Jim," "I happen to know old Smithson rather well and I lunched with him at the club and told him the whole tale. But in your letter you accused yourself of the thefts and——"

"And you came for me anyway, thinking I stole——"

Jim's strong face grew tender as Mary's blue eyes sought his. "You see I love you, dear," he explained, "how many gowns did you get from Madame Rosalia? You have always been dressed so exquisitely that the bill must be a long one. My mother thought the frock you wore to her ball was a bit too elaborate for so young a girl, but all the others were beautiful."

Mary laughed, for the first time since the cut-in dance. "Why, I never wore anything but homemade clothes until last night. When Sadie brought it home I thought maybe you'd like me better in it and so I—the pearl fringes were so adorable that I——"

"And so my little saint, Mary, turned into Eve," smiled Jim, kissing the white face until it bloomed rosily, "and what are pearl fringes, anyway?"

* * *

The Observer.

He Manages to Observe as He Makes His Rounds.

THE chiropodists say that women's feet are growing larger. It is because they stand around waiting for new hats to come out.

—

In German schools it is expected that teachers will use the gad on every pupil. If this is not done the teacher is discharged for neglect of duty.

—

Chicken growers say that roosters do not crow half as much as they used to. Things have gone up in price and perhaps the crows are raised.

—

Ghosts opened and shut doors in a house in Baltimore and no family will live there, rent free. Why not take the doors off their hinges?

—

The pearl in the clam shell has turned up again. It is in Baltimore this time, and the pearl is worth twelve hundred dollars. Please call and make charges and take it away.

—

Mrs. James Scott has arrived home. Lest this be a mysterious paragraph, we can go on and say that she eloped from her husband thirty years ago and has just returned to the old home.

—

In Wyoming it is a greater offense to cut off a cow's tail than it is to shoot a profiteering grocer. There is no room out there for bobtailed cows.

—

A folding bed folded up four babies at Lawrence, Kan., and they are trying to hang somebody for it. Put your babies to sleep on the floor.

—

It is claimed that a loving couple, taking a sleigh ride in Maine, were chased eleven miles by a wild cat. There looks to be something wrong with such a cat. She ought to have ended the chase in six or seven miles.

—

In St. Paul a man who falls down on the sidewalk has got to pay the city for all damages. That is the reason that all pedestrians look ahead of them.

—

A horse in Albany, N. Y., ate up two bushels of oats, a barrel of soft soap and then drank two barrels of water, and he died just as happy as any donkey that ever died eating thistles.

—

"I shall live to be ninety-six years old," said George Henderson, of Cincinnati. And then he up and died. The doctors said it was heart disease and that George had no right to make such a mistake.

—

You could formally go to North Dakota and get a divorce in two minutes. Now it takes thirty-four, and half the time you wish you had not.

* * *

Sport.

AN ENGLISHMAN, touring America for the first time, was riding in a taxi thru some of Chicago's most beautiful suburbs.

Just as the car hummed past an extremely well-kept cemetery, partly hidden by trees and flowers, he called to the driver to stop.

"I say, is this a summer resort?"

"You betcha," came the quick reply; "the last resort."

"Jolly attractive scenery; guess I'll stop and have tea heah."

"Say, this ain't no tea station; this is a marble orchard."

The Londoner bewilderingly repeated: "A marble orchard! I say, what do they raise?"

"Tombstones!"

"Right you are, carry on."

Says Piles Gone, no More Eczema

"I had eczema for many years on my head and could not get anything to stop the agony. I saw your ad and got one box of Peterson's Ointment and I owe you many thanks for the good it has done me. There isn't a blotch on my head now and I couldn't help but thank Peterson, for the cure is great." Miss Mary Hill, 420 Third avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa.

"I have had itching piles for 15 years and Peterson's is the only ointment that relieves me, besides the piles seem to have gone." A. B. Ruger, 1127 Washington avenue, Racine, Wis.

Use Peterson's Ointment for old sores, salt rheum, chafing and all skin diseases. 60 cents. Druggists recommend it. Mail orders filled by Peterson Ointment Co., Inc., Buffalo, N. Y.

A Head for Business

by

Keturah Van Tyle

LEVITSKI was nearing his home on the outskirts of one of the city's suburbs, his wagon piled high with the cast-off lares and penates of a motley collection of individuals who had parted with them from varying motives.

Gelda, his little Gelda, was boiling coffee; he sniffed the air luxuriously. Gelda was a good girl. Some day he would reward her. Perhaps, even tonight he might find something on the wagon that he could afford to let her keep.

"How goes it child?" he asked cheerfily, when she ran to greet him. "Any customers?"

"A woman came with a mattress she dragged off the prairie. I bought it for fifty cents."

"Fifty cents!" he shrieked, his face growing purple with rage. "Fifty cents! For a mattress that's been out on the prairie God knows how long? If we sell it again we get no more and that is not business!"

"I don't want to sell it over, Dadda. My bed is lumpy—I took the mattress for myself."

The junk dealer fretted and fumed over the wasted half dollar during the entire evening and with the morning began again to upbraid his daughter for failing to obey his teachings.

"No business in your head and I can't teach you none," he muttered sulkily, as he went forth to the day's battle, slamming the door after him

When he turned out of sight at the next corner, Gelda went to the back porch under which she had secreted her prize, hauled it out, scrubbed it thoroly with hot suds, built up a fire in the range and stood the mattress against it to dry.

In the afternoon, after it was dry, she was laying the clean, worn counterpane over the freshly made bed, in the little back room under the eaves, when Ignace Godowski peered in at her thru the open window.

"How goes it, pretty one?" he leered Ready to name the happy day?"

"Ready as I'll ever be—good-for-nothing!" retorted the girl, shooting an angry glance in his direction. "Run along now and let a girl as wants to, mind her own business"

But the leering visitor was not to be put off by any such idle banter. Suddenly vaulting over the window sill, he folded the helpless girl in a passionate embrace, his hot breath fanning her cheek, as he proceeded to take liberal toll of the pretty, pouting, red lips.

"Coward! Beast!" she fired, dealing him a rousing box exactly over his left ear, with the strong, young right hand she had succeeded in freeing. "I'll never marry you! I'll die first and Dadda shall feed my body to the crows! You—you loafer!"

"Not so fast," Godowski temporized, holding her at arm's length, feasting himself with the anticapatory pleasure of absolute possession. "Maybe Dadda say yes—he will give the pretty Gelda to Ignace—no!"

"No! The little mother in Heaven—her and the blessed Virgin will protect Gelda! They will not let her marry with a lazy one that none knows anything about, but that he lives without working!"

In a last sturdy wrench she managed to free herself and with winged feet, sped thru the archway into the kitchen, whence she snatched a hot poker from the range and turned to brandish it in the face of the pursuing Godowski.

"Come now, little one," he wheedled, "I didn't stop by to quarrel. I come for sure enough errand. I want that you should tell Ignace directly where you have the mattress an old woman brought yesterday. It is caked with dirt—'twill bring Dadda no money. I want it for—for a sick friend—I clean it. You shall have fifty cents for it!"—he leaned forward to whisper—"You should keep the money—a string of beads, maybe!"

In her surprise at his request, Gelda gradually lowered the poker, but as he advanced another step, she raised it again. That was a strange request for Ignace to make. It convinced her that he was not telling the truth about his reason for wanting the mattress. Since he was so eager to have it, she would keep its whereabouts a secret until something more of the motive behind all this was revealed to her.

"Go long, now," she said, lightly. "What should I know about a mattress? There is none in the junk room. If a woman bring one I tell you. I tell you more——" she looked at him slyly, writing imaginary words in the air with the poker. "If you really want a mattress, better not tell Dadda anything about that a woman is going to bring one. Leave it to Gelda. This much I do to pay you, to go my way now and let a girl do her honest work."

Apparently Ignace thought well of the suggestion. He moved off thru the door into the yard, but one backward glance at the tempting bit of brown-haired, brown-eyed femininity again aroused within him the passionate, hot desire to appropriate.

With a cat-like leap he was back in the house and had the girl imprisoned in his arms, before she had any opportunity to protect herself against the onslaught.

"God!" he muttered, throatily. "I want you, girl! Now! I got to have you! Ignace gets what he goes after, but he will give his little Gelda money—much—much money!"

At that moment, two perfect circles of strong, well formed white teeth suddenly snapped themselves together upon the man's arm; his hold loosened from the shock of the sharp, unexpected bite; the girl quickly tore herself from his hateful embrace, while the angry man, glaring at her menacingly, nursed an aching arm.

With one hand behind her and the other extended as tho to ward off a blow, Gelda backed quickly toward a table, in the drawer of which Dadda kept an old revolver. Groping wildly with her right hand, which was behind her, she reached with the left for the Big Ben which stood on the window sill near by, hoping thus to divert her tormentor's attention from her real purpose.

"I'll throw the clock!" she screamed, her eyes widening.

The right hand had the drawer open—outstretched fingers felt furtively for the gun

"A step more and I'll bang it on your head!"

Godowski, amused at the girl's heroics, shrugged his shoulders. "You'd brain Ignace—so!" he laughed. "And him your best friend, that would give you his name. Keeping to hisself this long time about your saint of a mother. A nice kind of a saint she was. Didn't you know what you are? Didn't Dadda never tell you him and the little mother never marry—that you're a——"

Godowski's words trailed off into a whisper—he caught his breath with astonishment; he was facing a revolver held in the hands of a seething, human volcano.

"Take it back!" she snarled. "Take it back, you dirty coward or I'll shoot the head off your good for nothing shoulders! Take it back, I say!"

The soft brown eyes blazed into fiery coals. She steadied herself, grasping the revolver more firmly but the man only laughed at her. Then the sinister thing in the girl's hands spat fire and Ignace promptly doubled up on the floor with a howl as of pain.

"Take it back?" he growled. "I guess not! It's so—every d—n word! You are a ——"

"What if it is so?" Gelda interrupted angrily. "Do you think I care? No! Dadda and the little mother loved. They were as true each to the other as tho a dozen priests had said the marriage mass for them! I'm proud that they stuck by. I'll always love them, in spite of your ugly story."

A WINCE of pain on the face of the man crumbled on the floor at her feet, over whom she still held the smoking revolver, brought her to a realiza-

Concluded on Page 23.)

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A Head for Business

(Concluded From Page 21.)

tion of what she had done. The thought that he might be dying—that her shot had proved fatal—swept over her. She—Gelda Levitski—a murderer!

As tho reading her mind, the man moaned and cried out harshly, "Go for help! I might die on your hands—then what? To jail for pretty Gelda—so! Hurry—a doctor—for God's sake, a doctor!"

Thoroly alarmed, Gelda dropped the gun and rushed out of the house toward the nearest telephone, which was two blocks away. "Holy Mother!" she breathed. "Help me to be in time!" But the operator gave her the wrong number twice and when she finally received the proper connection, the doctor was not in his office. He was expected, however; she left a call.

Frantic with terror lest Ignace die while she was trying to get help, she started back home, hoping to keep him alive with home remedies until the doctor arrived.

"Why had she been so hasty?" she asked herself. "What harm could ugly speeches do the little Polish mother, who was safe and happy in Heaven?"

Running, panting, she reached the end of the first block in the mad race against the grim enemy, when she tripped and fell. Scrambling hastily to her feet, she searched frantically in the pocket of her dress for her rosary and told a few beads.

"Oh God," she muttered, "why did I ever think of the gun? I am young and strong. I could have fought clear of shame without that! Little Mother in Heaven, hear me—I—your Gelda—did not mean to kill! I——"

Another block. Only the street to cross and then——

She approached the house; everything seemed ominously quiet. Her heart almost stopped beating. She fell clumsily over the threshold, expecting, she scarcely knew what.

It seemed hours before she was able to raise her exhausted body to her unsteady feet and then—the room was empty. The revolver was not on the floor where she had thrown it. Beads of cold perspiration gathered about her mouth.

"Ignace!" she called sharply.

No answer.

She looked closely for possible blood spots on the floor. There were none. Instinctively she turned to the little back room under the eaves. Here everything was in confusion. Chairs were overturned and the bed was completely torn apart. The precious mattress lay underneath the window, a yawning hole in its side, from which protruded great lumps of filling. On the cretonne box which served as a dresser was pinned a paper covered with coarse, mannish scrawls. There was no beginning nor ending but neither was necessary to disclose the identity of the scribe.

> **Your bullet is in the kitchen wall. Ignace have learned to dodge fine. Made believe you hit to get you to go for doctor. Saw you put my mattress on your bed. Woman steal it from me for sell to buy medicine some boys tell. 1,000 dollar sewed in mattress. Ignace get money too easy for have to work. I lied 'bout the little mother and Dadda. This I tell because Gelda damn fine little spitfire. Ignace like spitfire. I go far way but some day I come back for spitfire.**

When she finally finished deciphering the scrawl, the tention of the moment snapped and Gelda wept—softly, steadily, until the storm had spent itself, then she began to tidy the room, stooping first to pat back into shape the filling of the mattress, where her late unpleasant visitor had torn it out in his haste to retrieve his miniature fortune.

"One thousand dollar!" Gelda commented mentally. "One thousand dollar here in my bed and I never knew it!"

As she poked and pushed, her hand encountered something which felt like paper; wonderingly she drew it into view. Money—paper money! Two five-dollar bills! In a trice the situation was clear. In his haste to get away before she returned, Ignace had overlooked these, a small amount when compared to the whole, but to Gelda, it seemed princely. Ten whole dollars to do with exactly as she liked!

Ignace was leaving. Even if he missed the two bills he would not dare come back for them; he owed her that much for the fright he had given her. Better than anything else—she was not a murderess!

Patiently she sewed up the rent in the mattress; carefully made up the bed again and covered it with the clean, worn counterpane. What of Dadda? That she would never tell him of the afternoon's experiences, she was quite sure but wasn't she overlooking an excellent opportunity to set herself right with him?

She sat down in a rocker by the window and leaned her head thoughtfully upon her hands. Finally she laughed aloud—a gay, happy little laugh, full of content.

That night it was late when Levitski returned. Gelda was preparing supper as usual but she was dancing about as if on springs and her dark eyes sparkled like gems.

"Did you hear the news, child?" the father asked, not unkindly, in spite of the mental bruise he still sustained because of the wasted half dollar, "Ignace Godowski been pinched! Breta Borowski have baby—she say Ignace its father—they get him when he jump car to leave town! He have nine hundred and ninety dollar on him in bills! A bad lot him—a d—n bad lot!"

"Let's not talk of that—that loafer," Gelda objected, with well feigned innocence, pirouetting before her father with both hands behind her back. "Let him keep his dirty money—we don't want it! Do you"—coyly—"do you still think Gelda have no head for business, Dadda?"

"Yes"—unable to understand her maneuvers—"but maybe you learn some."

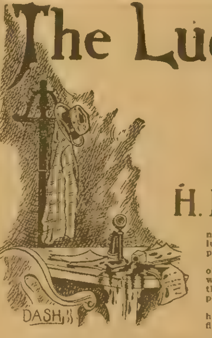
"What do you say to this then?"

Slowly she brought her hands forward and held before her astonished gaze one five-dollar bill. Levitski brushed his hand across his eyes, as tho to dispel a cloud against his vision. "Where did you get it, child?" he stammered, greedily closing his fingers about the extended bill.

"From the mattress;" Gelda answered simply.

Levitski, true to form, never questioning ways and means, the unusual methods he should have known Gelda must have employed to receive so much for a soiled, old mattress, thinking ever and only of results, folded the bill caressingly, placed it carefully in a shabby pocketbook and consigned the treasure to the safe shelter of his flannel shirt. Then he scratched his head thoughtfully and remarked dryly:

"You do better next time. We might a had a quarter more if you'd' a beat the woman down a bit in the first place."



The Luck That Failed

by

H. F. Grinstead

IN A BARE hollow twenty yards from a battered and weathered tent, two men sat by a meager fire drinking muddy coffee and munching soggy bread and scorched bacon. Their scattered cooking utensils, the lopsided pack that had been removed from the burro, and the general air of untidiness about their camp, proclaimed them out of their element. Plainly they were not men of the outdoor type, and dissatisfaction with their surroundings manifested itself in every word and gesture. Their natures were already too hardened and dwarfed to be touched by the softening influence of outdoor life and contact with nature.

"Rotten luck, I call it," the younger of the two remarked for the third or fourth time. Weakness rather than crime was indelibly stamped on his features, and dissipation had left its mark on his body.

"Luck!" snorted his companion. "Why, Lyman, a man always makes his own luck. Now the fact that we find that old geezer dead there in his tent might just as well be good luck as bad; depends on how we use it."

"Oh, it ain't that," Lyman retorted. "I'd just as soon find him dead as alive, but it looks like it might just as well be us that made this rich strike. Then more bad luck is that he's already filed his location notice and don't leave us a chance to jump the claim. On top of that it's in the name of him and his partner. Now if it was just him we could manage some way to get him buried where nobody would find him, sneak the ore samples and wait till the time limit had expired to relocate it in our own names."

"You're too passimistic, Lyman. The fact that there's rich gold ore on this claim is enough to make me want to use my brain a little before I lay down on the job. Don't ever bother about working with your hands, it's the brain work that counts. Chances are that old partner of his hasn't heard about the good luck and we can buy him out for the price of a pack mule."

"Not a chance, Polster. Trust them old prospectors to know a good thing when they see it. If that old partner of this dead miner gets a look at them samples he won't turn loose for no song."

"We can hide the ore samples before he gets here. We're in on the ground floor, and that counts big."

"No good; he'll go down in the shaft first off and take out more, maybe richer than this. No, I claim it's rotten luck that lets a man get his fingers on a gold mine then jerks it away from him."

"And I claim we'll get it yet—some way."

Two hours before, Polster and Lyman, dodgers of hard labor, moral scavengers of the mining camp and leeches on society in general, had chanced upon the little tent with the dead prospector inside. Evidently the old man had died from natural causes but a short time before their arrival. Intent upon appropriating anything that might be useful to them, the two adventurers had ransacked the tent. In addition to the scant supply of provisions, they had found a small sack containing samples of some of the richest gold ore they had ever seen, and also had come upon a copy of the original location notice showing that it had been filed for record in the name of John Landron and Jacob Powell.

A hundred feet from the tent was a short sloping tunnel, the discovery shaft, that dipped into the hillside from the bank of the dry wash. Near the shaft was a short post with the faded location notice tacked thereon, and within sight of the tent were three of the four corner monuments of the claim. These were conical heaps of stones with a stake in the center. It was twenty miles to the mining town of Pasco and half that far to the nearest permanent habitation of man. The country had been thoroly prospected, but never before had such ore been found as lay in the little tent by the side of the dead prospector.

"This Powell, now who would he be?" Polster inquired as he studied the copy of the location notice. "You know more people in this country than I do."

"Jake Powell—I know him," Lyman replied. "He got crippled some way last winter, and has been around Pasco most of the time while this old partner of his has been out prospecting. I never heard of either of them ever striking anything before, and I reckon it was just fool luck that let 'em in at last. Yes, just fool luck that let a dead man and a cripple have what by rights ought to come to me and you that needs it. It would disap-

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point one of them old geezers to find out he was rich."

"You said it right, Lyman," agreed Polster with a crafty grin. "I guess anything belongs to us by rights if we can get away with it without working too hard, and I believe I've got it doped out how we're going to get this mining claim with no trouble at all."

"I don't see——" Lyman interrupted.

"No, of course you don't see—you never see anything that's more than two inches from your nose."

"Anyway, I don't want to do no rough stuff. I don't hanker to have the sheriff on my trail, and claim jumping don't go with these old-timers."

"Nothing rough about it," Polster replied lazily. Everything according to law, not even a chance for a contest. Nobody will suspect that we have jumped a claim."

"Well, let's have the dope," Lyman interrupted impatiently.

"It's like this," Polster began. "The location notice has been filed, but the claim has never been surveyed for entry and won't be until the required amount of work has been done on it. You see that don't tie this claim up to any of the Government survey corners, and from the description on this notice it might as well be down this wash half a mile as right where it is. All we got to do is——"

"Just move it down half a mile," Lyman cut in with a sneer.

"No, we don't need to move it quite that far," Polster corrected. "This notice gives the peak of a bluff on the east side of a dry wash as the only fixed point to locate this mining claim from. About three hundred yards down the wash is another bluff that will answer just as well, and the claim can be located on the wash the same distance and direction from that bluff as this claim is from the bluff across there."

"Well."

"Now all we got to do is take up that old location post with the notice on it and set it about three hundred yards farther down this wash, then make new corner monuments and start a little digging in the bank. We can put some of this ore we found in the hole we dig to make it look right. Then we can claim this one and locate it as No. 2 above Discovery, it being about the right distance. Chances are nobody but this old fellow Landron ever saw the claim, and we'll let it out that we've been working this tunnel the last three weeks—ever since we left Pasco to keep from telling the grand jury some things."

"Sounds all right—all except this hard work we got to do."

"It is all right, not a chance in a thousand that it won't work; and it just takes a little brain work and a few hours with pick and shovel."

"But what are we going to do with that?" Lyman inquired with a jerk of his head in the direction of the tent.

"Oh, we'll have to move all that down on the new claim. It wouldn't do for us to bury him—might look suspicious. We'll just light out for Pasco as soon as we fix things up and have the sheriff come out and take charge. That will clear us and look like we had been neighbors of the old man."

"But I don't like to handle corpses," Lyman objected.

"Can't say that I'm fond of it, either, but if there's a little fortune of easy money in it I don't object."

ONCE they had hit upon this plan to put thru a shady transaction, the two rogues worked with a will. They were in constant fear lest a chance traveler come upon them before they had completed their arrangements, tho there was little danger of such interruption in that isolated region. It was not often they lost as much sweat as they did in the next five or six hours.

It was sundown when they finally got the dead prospector with his tent and other effects moved to the other claim and all the new corners established. The place they had selected for the bogus shaft was a rocky depression, and an hour's work with pick and shovel made it look as if some one might have spent several days prospecting there.

In spite of their strenuous labor the two of them started at nightfall for Pasco. Traveling all night, driving the burro before them, they arrived at daylight and went at once to communicate with the sheriff concerning the dead prospector. They next hunted up old Jake Powell, the crippled prospector, and likewise made him acquainted with the fate that had overtaken his old partner, along with the information about the claim he had staked.

"Reckon I'll go out an' take a look, but it ain't like John to have any luck," the old prospector declared when his grief had somewhat subsided. "Me an' him has worked more'n a hundred claims, but we ain't ever made nothin'. I always allowed it would have to be somebody else's stakin' if we had any luck. Anyway, I'm much obliged to you boys for lookin' after him the way you done. I reckon the sheriff will hold a inquest or somethin', but they ain't no use. I know it was them cramps that killed John. He had 'em one time when he was down on the Gila River, an' if it hadn't 'a' been fer hot meal poultices that I kep' puttin' on him he'd died that time I reckon."

The two rascals grinned and exchanged winks as the old man hobbled away to make preparations for the journey to the claim his dead partner had staked for him

"Looks like when that old fellow died it was about the luckiest thing he ever done—for us," Lyman observed.

"Luck wouldn't have helped us much if I hadn't had sense enough to figure out a way to use it," Polster responded.

The two claim-jumpers filed their location notice, designating their claim as No. 2 above the Landron & Powell location. Then for two weeks they toiled as they had never toiled before in all their useless lives in an effort to uncover the rich vein of ore that they knew must exist in the short tunnel that old John Landron had started. Hadn't they the samples there to show what had already been taken out?

Tho they accomplished less in a day than one able-bodied man could have done in three hours, every effort was a punishment. Every muscle in their dissolute bodies cried out in protest against the task that was being put upon them. Had it not been for the stronger will of Polster, Lyman would have thrown up the job in disgust, tho there might be millions under his feet

THREE hundred yards down the wash, old Jake Powell pottered about gradually deepening the shaft that the two rascals had started on the bogus claim. More to show a half-hearted faith in the judgment of his old comrade than for any hope of reward, he kept at work from morning till night. He paid occasional visits to his neighbors, and on one occasion confessed his misgivings.

"I don't know why John should ever 'a' staked that wu'thless claim. They ain't no indication of gold-bearin' rock on it. I been prospectin' for nigh forty year, an' it's the fu'st time I ever dug in them cracked up blue rocks fer gold. I reckon I'll keep on fer a spell tho, it might be that John knowed what he was about. Now I just wonder why he didn't stake this claim you boys has got, bein' that he was here first. That's right likely lookin' rock you been takin' out, but you can't ever tell."

A week passed without another visit from the old prospector. Polster and Lyman had chipped rock from every foot of exposed surface inside the little tunnel, and the best they could show was a faint trace of color. They were becoming doubtful and began to fear that John Landron's usual run of luck had passed to them with the ill-gotten mining claim. But there were the ore samples they had found in the tent to prove that the claim was rich!

"Suppose we get old Jake down here and ask him what he thinks of the prospect?" Polster suggested one evening after they had quit work. "We know little enough about prospecting anyway, and I reckon he would be pretty sure to tell us the truth. I don't think he suspects the trick we played on him."

"Wouldn't be a bad idea," Lyman agreed. "Something mighty funny about the way this here vein has pinched out if them samples old Landron had in his tent come out of here."

"Of course they came out of here. Where else would they come from?"

"I don't know, but if we could make somebody believe they come out of here we could sell out for a pile without any more work."

"Oh, of course a man wouldn't buy unless we could show him the vein, but we'll uncover it yet. Not a chance in a thousand a vein like that would pinch out."

The very next day Jake Powell paid the two a visit. They took him out to the shaft and showed him what they had been taking out.

"I reckon you ain't much better off than what I be in the way of gold. Now you might strike payin' ore after you've follered up this streak a hundred feet or so, an' ag'in I might pinch out to nothin' I ain't never seen nothin' very rich on this slope of the Cow Horn range."

"But here, look at these samples," Polster insisted, showing some of the ore that he had found in the tent by the side of John Landron's body. "This come out where the vein was first uncovered."

"Sho now, I reckon you ain't tryin' to play a joke on me, or you ain't had one played on you?" the old man asked quizzically as he turned the fragment of ore over in his hand. "I've seen this same piece of ore time in plenty. My old pardner got it up at the Socorro Queen ten year ago. He was funny thataway; he took a notion that gold attracted gold an' you couldn't make him believe nothin' else. He allers took this in his knapsack when he went prospectin', claimin' it'd guide him along the richest veins. I found some of the pieces like this on the claim where I been workin'—reckon he must 'a' lost 'em accidental—but it didn't fool me none. He was a believer in signs an' things, John was. Now, I don't——"

But both rascals had slumped down weakly upon a pile of broken rock and failed to hear the last sentence.

"Shorely John didn't try to fool you boys with these samples," Jake continued without taking notice of the effect his remarkable disclosure had upon his hearers. "It wa'n't like him to play tricks that away. Now like as not he lost this out'n his knapsack right here, bein' as he must have traipsed up an' down this wash conside'able before he located. Then his luck——"

Neither Polster nor Lyman had spoken since the old mad made the startling revelation concerning the ore samples—numerous and conflicting emotions deprived them of coherent speech for the time. Apparently willing to do the talking so long as he had an attentive audience, the old prospector kept on.

"Speakin' of luck, I reckon John was right lucky after all. Like enough it wa'n't gold he was lookin' fer in that claim he staked; but they's plenty of these an' they run as much to the pound as good ore does to the ton."

He drew from his pocket what first appeared to be broken bits of bluish-green rock, but which on closer observation were readily identified as turquoises with some of the less valuable matrix that he found in connection with the precious stones

"Coupla hundred dollars in that handful," old Jake declared. "Pore ol' John, luck never knocked at his door whilst he was livin', but I reckon he's made his old pardner rich. Some folks says they ain't no such thing as luck, but it seems like——"

An hour later two disconsolate wretches belabored a mangy burro along the trail toward Pasco.

"Rotten luck, I call it, and you claim you've got a brain that can turn bad luck into good any old time," Lyman exploded for the third time. "And all that hard work wasted."

His companion had reached that stage where sulky silence was more eloquent of his mental attitude than the vilest profanity.

* * *

We seldom find people ungrateful as long as we are in a position to render them services.

Are You a Mother?

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A Smile or Two

Obeying the Law.

The professor swims from the sinking boat and climbs up on the bank. Then dashing in again, he returns to the wreck and rescues his wife.

"But why didn't you save her before?" asks the listener in wonderment.

"Ah, my dear sir," was the learned man's reply, "I was bound to save myself first. Self-preservation is the first law of nature."

❧

SOME CATCH

"LAST week, John Stapleton fished a bucket of butter out of a well which is 60 feet deep, on his farm near Fayette," says the Kansas City Journal, and further adds, "it has been in the well twenty-one years." The story sounds phony, says the Maryville Tribune. If that butter had been in the well twenty-one years, it should have been able to climb out without any help.

❧

Abe's Best Joke.

Abe requests us to reprint his best joke, about the monkey in the restaurant that grabbed his half dollar and swallowed it.

"It made me so durned mad," said Abe, "that I picked the monkey up by the hind legs and shook him good, and before I got thru I shook $2.95 change out of him."

❧

NOT ACQUAINTED

A party dining at a leading hotel at a time when all of the newspapers were chronicling a visit of Secretary Hughes to Chicago, were very much interested in a bewhiskered personage on the other side of the room.

"Pardon me," said one of them, stopping a passing waiter, "but isn't that Hughes over there?"

"I don't know," replied the waiter "You know, so many people come here"

❧

Speaking by the Card.

Jack Pott—Let me hold your hand when we go to ask your father's consent.

The Girl—Why?

Jack Pott—Unless I hold a good hand he is apt to try to bluff me out.

❧

ON DOCTOR'S PORCH

An English doctor, who numbered among his patients a very wealthy titled family, was called in to prescribe for a slight ailment of the eldest son, a young man of marriageable age.

"H'm, a slight cold," grunted the old man after an examination, "due, I should say, to exposure. Been courting some young lady, I presume, eh?"

"Yes, yes, doctor," replied the young man. "Right for once, I must admit."

"Ha!" ejaculated the doctor. "I thought so; some fortune hunting minx, I suppose?"

"I think not; at least, I hope not."

"Bah! they're all alike, young man But who is she, may I ask?"

"Your daughter, sir," replied the young man.

❧

SHE HEARD HIM

A DEAF man was being married and the minister asked the usual question, "Do you take this woman for your lawful wife?"

"Eh?" said the deaf man.

"Do you take this woman for your lawful wife?" This time a bit louder.

The groom seemed to get angry. "Oh, I don't know," he said. "She ain't so awful. I've seen wuss than her that didn't have as much money.

❧ ❧ ❧

Remarkable Asthma Treatment Found by Dakota Traveling Man

Cured Himself and Now Offers Treatment to Others.

SIOUX FALLS, S. Dak.—D. E. Kirschman 1400 E. Sixth street, of this city, reports he found a new treatment which completely healed him of Asthma and all its disagreeable effects. As a traveling salesman, Mr. Kirschman was for many years afflicted with this disease and often had to lay off for weeks at a time. By pure accident, he found this remarkable treatment. It cured him and he then offered it to several of his friends. The results were so astonishing that his friends persuaded him to give other sufferers a chance to get the same relief from this distressing ailment. Mr Kirschman has lived in Sioux Falls for many years and enjoys an enviable reputation as a man of upright character and steadfast moral integrity. If you are bothered with Asthma, write him today and ask him to explain his treatment. He will gladly do this without cost.—Adv.

Grandma's Remedy

By Gordon Sayre

TWO personal servants, three nurses, a couple of directors and a magnate or two, not to mention a mere father and mother, were greatly distressed. In the next room two famous physicians were in consultation and in still another large room the diminutive cause of it all lay supinely on his miniature back. The patient caused hardly a lump to appear upon the silken covers of the immense four poster bed. The largest part of him was his beautiful brown eyes. A grave frock-coated man had, a few minutes before, stuck a large thermometer in the little patient's mouth. A few minutes previous to that another impressive looking individual had placed a forked instrument over his little heart and listened with bated breath while that stout little organ did its level best to remain normal. The patient expected that the next visitor would bring an electric drill, like the dentist's.

There was cause enough for all this grave concern. The little boy's illness was holding up a motion picture which involved some hundred thousand dollars. The child didn't exactly feel as tho he were going to die, but, somehow, he had gathered from the whispered comment of the sick room visitors that there was something terribly wrong with him. To save his life he couldn't even think of the words they had used, but he remembered that when he had heard them he had been terrified. He turned in pleasant expectation as his mother entered the room. She advanced at once to the side of his bed.

"My poor little baby boy!" she began, "what can be the matter?"

"Nothin', Mom; I'll be up and at 'em, tomorrow."

"I'm afraid not, dearie, those two men who were just in here are great child specialists; men who are supposed to know all about children's troubles; neither one of them is able to tell what is wrong with you!"

"There's nothing wrong, mother dear, don't you worry. I'll be back on the lot tomorrow, you see if I'm not."

His mother sighed.

"Tell me, Sonny, have we been working you too hard; do your lessons worry you, or don't we get what you would like to eat; tell your mother all about it?"

"Nothing wrong at all Mom. Gee, I think it's swell to go out on location with the regular actors and make pictures, honest—there's nothing I'd rather do! And teacher, well, he's a darn nuisance, still, if I'm ever going to learn to use big long words like Douglas Hart I'll have to suffer, I suppose; no, my lessons aren't hard—I want to learn a lot."

"Is it your food then, dearie; perhaps you're not getting the right number of calories," his mother mused, half to herself.

"Honest, Maw, cross my heart, I haven't been eating any calories at all, honest to goodness, hope to —Aw, Mom, now, don't; please don't cry like that!"

The lady rushed from the room overcome with her emotions. Surely, the little lad thought, there must be something terribly wrong if his usually lighthearted mother cried like that! He turned wearily on his side and tried to think of something he wanted. Way back in his mind he knew that there was something he longed for, very much, but it was a vague, half-formed thought. He seemed to grasp it, only to have it slip away from him. He gave it up and closed his eyes, but, just as he was about to slip off into slumber it came to him all of a sudden. Sitting bolt upright in bed, he spoke out loud.

"Grandma!"

At the sound of his voice a nervous nurse opened the door leading to the bathroom, where she had been preparing the half-hourly dose. At the same moment the door leading into the hall was opened and in came his father and mother and the two grave men who resembled undertakers. They looked excitedly at one another.

"He spoke aloud!" cried the nurse sibilantly.

"I heard it, too!" confirmed his mother.

The two doctors nodded together, gravely, and left in search of their bags.

"Did you call, dear?" questioned the excited mother.

"No Mom, I was just thinking out loud, I guess."

They all looked at each other; the nurse voiced the thought that was in their minds.

"Delirious!"

"I was just thinking," continued the boy, "that I wish't grandma was here."

His father spoke out excitedly.

"My mother!" He rushed from the room. The Western Union and Postal wires were made hot with urgent messages. Still not satised the anxious father called New York by telephone. He thought of engaging an aeroplane to bring his mother west, but discarded the idea as impractical, for his mother would undoubtedly refuse to risk her life in one of those "contraptions." The little old lady had no telephone in her Brooklyn home, but a messenger from the phone company summoned her to a public telephone.

"That you, mother?" queried the breathless man, and then he rushed on.

"Grab a rattler, I mean a train, quick, the next train out—boy sick—has some strange unnamed malady—baffling physicians here. Oh, hurry, hurry, he's supposed to be working on a hundred thousand dollar picture right now, and oh, my goodness, I'm afraid, I'm afraid—do hurry, won't you mother?"

At the expiration of five anxious days the little old lady from the East arrived and was whisked immediately to the boy's bedside. He turned large brown eyes to meet the old lady's twinkling blue ones. She spoke chidingly, almost brusquely.

"Why, the idea! A big boy, like you, lying in bed! Shame on you—the very idea!"

The boy smiled up at her sheepishly.

"Put out your tongue and let your grandmother have a look at it." He obligingly did so. The old lady looked intently at the little coated white tongue, and felt of the boy's head. Then she rose and joined the anxious group in the hall. This time there were three eminent medics present. The parents of the youth introduced the old lady; she responded somewhat stiffly, eyeing them suspiciously.

"Can one of you doctors tell me where I'll find a drug store?" she questioned.

Every one present looked at her strangely.

"Anything you want, Mother," began her son; "I'll send right out and get it."

"Huh, wouldn't trust any of you people to get what I'm after," she replied. In spite of their remonstrations she insisted upon leaving the amazed group and, in the company of one of the doctors went to a nearby drugstore. She quietly but firmly requested that dignitary to remain outside while she went in to make her purchases. From the drug store they went to a grocery and thence back to the palatial building they had left. The old lady re-entered the sick room with her purchases, closed the door firmly after her and went to work. In ten minutes she had carried out all of the white enameled furniture incident to the sick room of one richly endowed with this world's goods, disposed of a half a hundred odd shaped bottles, hidden a stethoscope or two and pulled up the shades. Only once during the afternoon did she open the door and then it was to dispatch a servant for the boy's dog, which had been lying nose between its paws and tail between its legs, out in the yard.

The next morning the great and inimitable juvenile, much to the amazement of the medical men assembled, was tearing about the house bent on destruction, as usual, with a healthy color, a red tongue, and eyes as bright as incandescents.

"What we would like to know, Madam," asked the spokesman of the specialists, "is: what did you purchase yesterday in that drug store?" The little old lady laughed.

"Just wait here a moment," she replied, "and I'll go and fetch what's left of it; you need some in those black bags of yours, and, by the way, if you want my advice, I think you'd better each take a little yourselves." In a moment she returned with a small pasteboard box and a little tin can which she presented gravely to the leader of the trio. He took the two articles and examined them gingerly.

"Diaphoretic pyrites of——" he began.

"Diaperic pyrites of nothing! that's just sulphur and molasses. Next time you run across a kid, in the springtime, that's all in, and has a coated tongue and a temperature, give him a small dose of that and a large dose of jollying.

* * *

Lincoln's Scorn of Failures

WHEN Abraham Lincoln was a young man he ran for the Legislature in Illinois, and was badly swamped.

He next entered business, failed, and spent seventeen years of his life paying up the debts of a worthless partner.

He was in love with a beautiful young woman to whom he became engaged—then she died.

Entering politics again, he ran for Congress, and was badly defeated. He then tried to get an appointment to the United States land office, but failed.

He became a candidate for the United States Senate, and was badly defeated.

In 1856 he became a candidate for the vice presidency and was once more defeated.

In 1858 he was defeated by Douglas.

One failure after another—bad failures—great setbacks. In the face of all this he eventually became one of the greatest men of America, whose memory is loved and honored thruout the world.

Great successes often are built on the ruins of many failures.

* * *

A Truthful Boy.

"BOY," said a policeman to a ragamuffin, "didn't I see you having a fight the other day?"

"Yes, a little one," answered the boy.

"Wasn't it an awful ferocious, savage fight?"

"No, sir, it was nothing of the kind. A boy offered me two handfuls of peanuts if I would stand up to a big boy. I stood up and received a blow on the nose, and I ran away and got home, and ran under my ma's bed, and after about an hour the big boy got discouraged and went away. Oh, no, sir, there is nothing savage or ferocious about me. I knew I was a licked boy and I got under the bed as soon as possible."

* * *

Glowworms Bright in Storm.

GLOWWORMS are much more brilliant when a storm is coming than at other seasons. Like many other mysteries of nature, this curious circumstance has never been explained.

* * *

A Bore.

"When a man keeps talkin' 'bout hisself," said Uncle Eben, "he gits to be about as companionable as a fiddle player wif ony one tune."

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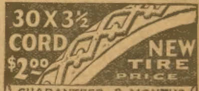

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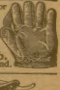

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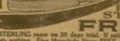

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No Fellowship With TNT

By Arthur Talmage Abernethy

SOPHRONIA ANN HELTON was in two things a connoisseur.

In her appreciation of the stimulation of the wholesome and overflowing bowl, Sophronia stood easily at the head of the class.

Children she had, yes, even to the second generation, for she possessed grandchildren numerous.

But, unlike her dircet descendants, Sophronia, in her altitude of irresponsibility, and her sense of scorn for conventionalities, had contributed to the community's population after a manner which society did not altogether approve.

But that was in her more vivacious and youthful period.

Now, that Sophronia was old and decrepit, she had come into the better ways of society, for it is easy for the old to be moral.

But there was that other thing in which Sophronia excelled, and that was the pastime of a large clay pipe. Sophronia could extract more solid comfort and consolation out of a quiet smoke by her open hearthstone than your elite clubman e'er coaxed from an imported cigarette, drawn deftly from a jewelled casket.

When Sophronia anticipated a case of "blues" her continual recourse was to her clay pipe and its homely ingredients, burly leaf, which she proudly admitted she coaxed from her own soil by the till of her own hands.

Now, Sophronia was not known to the community of her yeomen neighbors as Sophronia. I question if she herself realized that she bore so stately a title at all. To the community she was "Old Phrony," and to her numerous offspring of the second installment, "Grandmaw Phrone."

Sophronia had dwelt near eighty summers on this mundane sphere, but her tall lithe figure and steel greyish-blue eyes gave the Ananias to her years. To the casual observer Sophronia looked not one moon older than half a century, and she was, as is the run of mountain women, quick of movement, agile as the wild mountain cat that roamed her native hills, and—be it admitted in the author's well-known devotion to accuracy—equally as dangerous as the aforesaid beast in ferocity, once she was perturbed in temperament; that is, "riled" as she complacently termed it.

One of Sophronia's prize pleasures was boasting to her heirs and assigns that she had escaped the common ills of humanity; only the once before the period of this incident, had she suffered the touch of disease.

That was when she had exposed herself a wee too tedious assisting her "Moonshiner" belated consort to make his escape thru the fastnesses of the mountains, following a breach in his diplomatic relations with the minions of the law, and when he had been compelled in sheer self-protection to slay his antagonist.

For late in life Sophronia had taken unto herself a husband, to whom out of deference to her hoary age, she had given no heirs, tho it must be said Sophronia lived moderately serenely with her also aged companion to the time of his immature taking-off, at the end of a hangman's noose.

It is to be questioned whether under ordinary emotions Sophronia would have confessed her physical defection, but, on the day that her liege-lord had been hanged in the county court-yard, she had come, clad in her most radiant red raiment, tethered hither and yon in ribbons of bright yellow, like some reginal sovereign granting her subjects a "once over."

There seemed something superior in having one's husband hanged, and Sophronia was equal to the occasion. Armed with a plethoric parcel of home-cooked ginger cakes, intersected with a flagon of—let us hope—apple cider, Sopronia attended her consort's killing, lordly in her very step.

But to the local Methodist preacher's wife, tempted to sympathy by an inquiry as to her emotions, Sophronia had humbly bowed her white hairs in grief as she sobbed:

"I'm not in the best fit. I've got too bad a cold to enjoy the occasion."

But it is of Sophronia's later defection we wish to speak.

Sophronia had yielded reluctantly enough to the ravages of time, and fell ill with a deep-seated chill.

Her faithful granddaughters had surrounded her, for there is a filial devotion among the "Moonshiners" which would point a moral to many a more resplendent resident.

Sophronia's descendants had tucked her snugly in her homely covers, and, after a persuasion which seemed to shake all Sophronia's time-served antipathies to physicians, they had prevailed upon her to permit a physical examination, which consisted for the most part in protruding her tongue to the doctor—something Sophronia would have willingly done, in sheer derision of his healing art. The doctor had prescribed large doses of quinine, which he left in their menacingly-looking jackets of capsule, and he had gone on his way.

Sophronia detected the capsules with a look of suspicious dread. Her awe of their contents brought on another chill.

Sophronia would have none of them. To her offsprings' appeals she was obdurate. She lay in her bed and shook and moaned.

Growing more and more uncomfortable, under the weakness of exhausted energies, Sophronia finally yielded, capitulated to science, and consented to take the capsules, if administered one by one.

Be it said to the doctor's wise diagnosis, Sophronia grew better under the spell of his treatment, and her granddaughters lifted her gently into her old armchair, by her homely fireside.

Bethinking of "grandmaw's predilection to her pipe, one of the faithful descendants hastily fetched it, filled with its instimulating contents, and affixed a large burning coal off the altar of the fire, that blazed on the hearth.

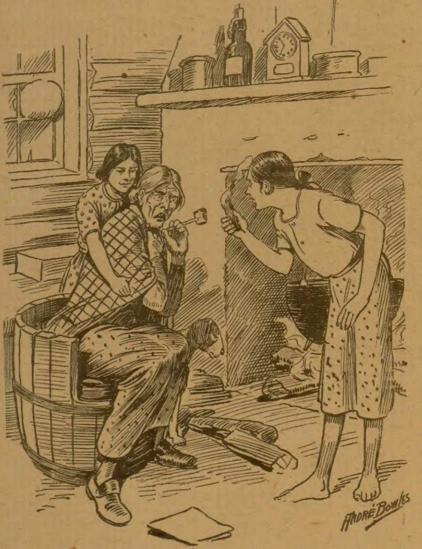
She passed the pipe to Sophronia, with the suggestion that she indulge herself to her heart's content.

Sophronia rose to flee, but her granddaughter restrained her.

"Get away from me with that!" Sophronia howled.

"Take it away, I say!" she thundered. "Don't ye know thet I'm full of them durned cartridges?"

So Sophronia for the once forewent the pleasure of her pipe.



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If you wish to try this amazing invigorator, write confidentially to the Melton Laboratories, 625 Melton Bldg., Kansas City, Mo., and the treatment will be mailed to you in a plain, sealed package. You may enclose $2, or simply send your name, without money, and pay $2 and postage on delivery. In either case, if you report "no results" after one week, the laboratories will refund your money. These laboratories are thoroughly reliable, so nobody need hesitate to accept their guaranteed offer.—Adv.

* * *

Finding Summer Board.

A FARMER had a sign upon his farmhouse of "Summer Boarders," when a city official and his wife came along in a buggy and stopped to ask:

"So you take summer boarders, do you?"

"I do," was the reply.

"But what inventions have you got to make an interesting place of this?"

"Oh, well, if you go to talking that way, I don't expect to please you."

"Any fishing?" was asked.

"They get some bites up here, but they don't catch any fish."

"You have got a small house," was said.

"But you can sleep on the floor or out on the lawn."

"Any wild game in the woods back there," he persisted.

"I have never seen any," said the honest farmer.

"But there must be some reason why people should want to board here."

"Well, yes, there is a reason," slowly replied the farmer. "People come here to board because they want to see me."

"But I don't see that you are any different from other farmers," said the city official.

"You don't, eh? Well, I will tell you. Everybody along this road knows I contributed for a bushel of potatoes and four bushel of turnips to build the belfry on the Baptist meeting house in town. Yes, if it hadn't been for me they wouldn't have had no belfry at all."

The official and his wife said things were too mixed up and so they moved along.

* * *

He Was Absent-minded.

THEY were going up to the house together in order that the friend might be introduced to the other man's wife.

"Let's see," mused the married man as he drew near his home, "are you absent-minded at times?"

"Yes, very," was the reply.

"Then—then you might delay your call for a week."

"Yes, I think it would be better," was the reply. "I might, in an absent way, say I was out on the Boston road last Sunday."

"Yes, you might," replied the other.

"And I might say I saw you in a new auto."

"Yes, indeed."

"And I might say you were with your wife."

"Yes, and make me lots of trouble for the next month. I think you had better wait a week or two."

And the friend passed on, with a squeeze of the hand such [illegible] men bestow on such occasions.

* * *

Indian Music.

THE music of the American Indians is solely and simply vocal. It seems to be generally agreed by musical authorities that the Indians' songs have in them nothing borrowed from instruments, nothing of artificial instigation. An Indian melody never serves two sets of words. There is no instance, it appears, where the people have sung the different stanzas of a ballad to the same air. A large proportion of Indian songs are entirely without words at all, syllables being employed to carry the tones. Perhaps the most striking peculiarity of Indian music is the lack of definite pitch. The Indian begins his song where the natural quality of his voice and his mood at the time render it easiest for him to sing it. The pitch of the song depends upon the individual.

* * *

Something to Make Thinkers Think

Acrostic.

91—1. A famous and important Chinese city.
2. A precious stone.
3. A boy's name.
4. Another precious stone.
5. A girl's name.

The primals spell still another precious stone.

Rebus.

92—Tho they catch me with a hook
I'm more allied to bird than beast.
In form more like a snake I look,
Tho having sixteen feet at least.

Girls' Names Jumbled.

93—1. Cenebri.
2. Elvyen.
3. Enier.
4. Dasei.
5. Hatreb.
6. Leenh.

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES.

88—Easy Transpositions.

1. Meat, team. 2. Peach, cheap. 3. Pear, reap. 4. Smile, miles. 5. Lean, Neal. 6. Leer, reel. 7. Peal, leap.

89—Riddle.

URYS.

90—Five-word Square.

S P A R E
P A P E R
A P P L E
R E L I C
E R E C T

It is not desired that readers send in the answers to the puzzles. They are offered simply as brain teasers, and the correct answers will be printed the following week.

LEG SORES

The Bayles Distributing Co., 1856 Grand Ave., Kansas City, Mo., will mail Free Sample of ANTI-FLAMMA, a Soothing Anti-septic Poultice that draws out the poisons, stops the itching around sores and Heals While You Work. Write today describing case.—Adv.

* * *

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.
—Adv.

WASTED ENERGY

The steamer was only a few feet from the quay when there was a sudden commotion, and a man came running madly from the dock gates, shouting to the officials to wait a moment.

Without pausing in his stride, he flung his bag on the boat, took a desperate leap and landed on the deck with a crash.

"Good!" he gasped. "A few seconds later I should have missed it."

"Missed it!" exclaimed the officer who helped him to his feet. "This boat is just coming in."

Did a Thoro Job.

Reggie—I was out with Peggy last night, and she fell down and sprained her ankle.

Oswald—Did you have to carry her back home?

Yes; I carried all of her home.

Threat of Matrimony.

"Robert," said the stern young woman teacher. "If you cannot behave yourself I shall have to take your name."

Later Bobby confided to his sister: "My teacher threatened to marry me if I don't look out."

A Perfect Excuse.

The little girl had thrown a stick at her sister, a year or two her senior.

"Katherine," said daddy, "did you throw that stick at your sister?"

"Yes, daddy," was the defiant reply.

"Why did you do it?"

"Because," instantly replied the youngster, with her eyes flashing, "afterwards she hit me."

Better Than a Sister.

Alice—Isn't that a sorority sister of yours over there?

Bluegown—Indeed not; she's a friend of mine.

CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

Information-- The rate for one insertion in The Saturday Blade and one insertion in the Chicago Ledger is 35 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500-514 N. Dearborn St., CHICAGO.

SALESMEN WANTED

EASY TO SELL GROCERIES, PAINTS, AUtomobile oils, roofing, to consumers from samples. No capital or experience necessary; steady, profitable work. Commissions advanced. Satisfaction guaranteed; 51 years in business. Write for full particulars. Loverin & Browne Co., Wholesale Grocers, 1759 So. State St., Chicago, Ill.

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS: $5 TO $15 DAILY EASY, INTROducing latest guaranteed hosiery. Must wear, or replaced. 54 styles, 27 colors. No experience or capital needed. Just show samples, take orders. We deliver and collect. Your pay daily in advance. Transportation charges paid, monthly bonus besides. 12-hour service. Elegant outfit furnished; all colors, grades, including silks. Mac-O-Chee Mills Co., Square 90074, Cincinnati, O.

YOU CAN EARN $30 CASH EXTRA EVERY week during your spare time and get your own clothes free besides, taking tailoring orders. We are the only house that pays double. No experience necessary. Real cloth samples will be sent free. Write today before you forget. Est. 1896. A. E. Stern, Sales Mgr., 161 W. Harrison St., Dept. 828, Chicago.

TAILORING AGENTS: GET OUR POWERful proposition. $35.00 suits for $21.85, including a good profit for you. Big swatch line of samples in handsome carrying case. Hustlers make $75 a week. Territory going fast. Write at once. State experience. Knickerbocker Tailoring Company, Dept. 223, Chicago, Ill.

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES: START profitable business selling $10 accident and sickness policy. $5,000 death, $25.00 weekly benefits. State protects policy holders. Guaranteed yearly income from renewals. Dept. B, Room 516, 75 Montgomery street, Jersey City, N. J.

BIG FAST PROFITS FOR AGENTS. REpeater Six Fuse Plugs sell on sight wherever there is electricity. Do away with lighting troubles. Welcomed everywhere. Get details. Sample 25c. Moss-Schury Manufacturing Company, Inc., 12-A, Detroit, Michigan.

GENERAL AGENTS. SOMETHING NEW. Whirlwind sellers. "Repeat" Washing Powder. Washes clothes without rubbing. Women throw away washboards. Big profits. Exclusive territory. Write today free package Kittredge Co., 13 Putnam St., Tunkhannock, Pa.

AGENTS—FREE SAMPLE DR. ELLIOTT'S Vegetable Oil Soap; 19 full sized packages right out of stock, tea, coffee, extracts, spices, food products, laundry and toilet soap samples. Everything furnished. Send postal today. Department A-131, Harley Company, Dayton, Ohio.

AGENTS MAKE $10 DAILY—BIG LINE guaranteed extracts, food products, perfumes, toilet goods, household necessities. No capital or experience needed. Free sample case and instructions. Write for amazing offer. Perkins Products Co., Desk 7, Hastings, Nebr.

AGENTS MAKE BIG MONEY SELLING Bliss Native Herbs, manufactured since 1888 to relieve constipation, rheumatism, indigestion, biliousness. Some agents make as high as $300 per month. So can you. Write to-day. We tell you how. Dept. C 4, Alonzo O. Bliss Co., Bliss Building, Washington, D. C.

AGENTS—CREW MEN, NOVELTY MEN. Gloo-Pen, a 60c mucilage fountain pen; everybody buys on demonstration. Write for big profit plan. Gloo-Pen Co., 75-BB Front St., New York.

SELL MADISON "BETTER MADE" SHIRTS direct from our factory to wearer. No capital or experience required. Easily sold. Big profits. Write for free samples. Madison Mills, 503 Broadway, New York.

EARN $10 DAILY SILVERING MIRRORS, plating, refinishing metalware, autos, chandeliers, headlights, table ware. Complete working outfits furnished. Y. Decie Laboratories, 1133 Broadway, New York.

GREATEST SENSATION! ELEVEN PIECE toilet article set selling like blazes at $1.75 with $1.00 dressmakers shears free to each customer. Spring rush on. Foster Reid Co., 78 Winslow Bldg., Station C, Chicago.

RUMMAGE SALES MAKE $50.00 DAILY. We start you. Representatives wanted everywhere. Permanent business. Dept. 40, "Wholesale Distributors," 609 Division street, Chicago.

MAKE MONEY SILVERING MIRRORS, all kinds plating, knives, spoons, auto headlights. Outfits furnished. Free booklet. International Laboratories, Dept. 20, 311 Fifth Ave., New York.

MAKE BIG PROFIT WITHOUT RISKING a cent. Our pure rubber house and tea aprons, ladies' sanitary outfits, etc. Sell on sight. This is a real proposition. Mayneda Co., 37 Murray St., New York.

YOU CAN MAKE BIG MONEY SELLING ladies silk underwear and silk hosiery. Samples free. Liberal commission. Write for terms to Linke Bros., Dept. A, 119 West 23rd st., N. Y.

AGENTS—MAKE BIG MONEY SELLING shoes direct to wearer. 40 styles. Prices have just been reduced. Write for catalog and samples. Marshall Shoe Co., 194 Whitehall St., Atlanta, Ga.

AGENTS—BIG PROFITS SELLING HUMAN hair nets by dozens. Every woman buys. Steady demand. Write. Iger Co., 1123 Broadway, New York.

EASY MONEY SELLING TO COLORED PEOple. Write for our attractive proposition. Marcellene Chemical Company, 1333 E. Franklin St., Richmond, Va.

SELL EXTRACTS AND SOAPS; NO money required. Liaro Co., Dept. 134, St. Louis, Mo.

AGENTS WANTED—(Continued)

EARN BIG MONEY FAST APPLYING GOLD initials to autos. Every owner buys—$1.35 profit on $1.50 sale—particulars and samples free. Write quick. Lithogram Co., Dept. 22, East Orange, N. J.

MAKE $10 TO $20 DAILY SELLING GUARanteed silk hosiery, full or part time. Men or women. Syndicate Products Co., Dept. Q, 350 Broadway, New York.

EVERYBODY USES EXTRACTS. SELL Duo Double Strength Extracts. Complete line household necessities. Big repeaters. Write today. Duo Co., Dept. E5, Attica, N. Y.

JUST OUT! NEW FORD SPECIALTY GOing fast. Big money maker. Write quick. Bear Manufacturing Company, Rock Island, Ill.

HELP WANTED

VACANCIES CONSTANTLY. U. S. GOVERNment positions. $95-$250 month. Men-women 18 up. Steady. Vacations. List positions free. Write today sure. Franklin Institute, Dept. A 25, Rochester, N. Y.

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

MEN AND WOMEN WANTED: ALL OR spare time at home. Big income. Send 25c. Franklin, 2201½ Farnam, Omaha, Neb.

MALE HELP WANTED

EARN $110 TO $250 MONTHLY, EXPENSES paid, as railway traffic inspector. Position guaranteed after 3 months' spare time study or money refunded. Excellent opportunities. Write for free booklet, CM-12 Stand. Business Training Inst., Buffalo, N. Y.

SHOES—BECOME OUR LOCAL SALESMAN selling high grade shoes direct to wearer. Quick seller and good commission. Experience not required. Tanners Shoe Mfg. Co., 494 C St., Boston, Mass.

DETECTIVES NEEDED EVERYWHERE; large salaries; cities, towns, excellent positions; experience unnecessary; particulars free. Write National Headquarters, 186 East 79th, New York.

BE A DETECTIVE. EXCELLENT OPPORtunity to earn big money, travel, thousands of dollars offered in rewards; established 1909; particulars free. Write C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, BEGINNERS $150-$250 monthly, railroads everywhere (which position?). Railway Association, Brooklyn, N. Y.

BE A DETECTIVE, $50-$100 WEEKLY, travel over world; experience unnecessary. American Detective Agency, 1000 Columbia, St. Louis.

DETECTIVES NEEDED EVERYWHERE. Work home or travel. Experience unnecessary. Write, George Wagner, former Government detective, 1964 Broadway, New York.

ALL MEN, WOMEN, BOYS, GIRLS, 17 TO 60, willing to accept Government positions, $117-$200, traveling or stationary, write Mr. Ozment, 106 St. Louis, Mo., immediately.

FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, BAGGAGEMEN, sleeping car, train porters (colored). $140-$200. Experience unnecessary. 686 Railway Bureau, E. St. Louis, Ill.

MEN—AGE 17 TO 45. EXPERIENCE UNnecessary. Travel; make secret investigations, report. Salaries; expenses. American Foreign Detective Agency, 126, St. Louis.

$35 WEEK. MEN 15 UP, BECOME AUTOmobile experts. Earn while learning. Write, Franklin Institute, Dept. A 404, Rochester, N. Y.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

WOMEN TO SEW; MATERIAL PREPAID to your house. Plain sewing, steady work. No canvassing. Send stamped envelope for prices we pay. Universal Co., Desk 4, Phila., Pa.

WANTED, WOMEN, GIRLS, LEARN GOWN making at home. $35.00 week. Sample lessons free. Franklin Institute, Dept. A 505, Rochester, N. Y.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

$5000 YEARLY INCOME PAID THOUSANDS who invested in Texas lands. $2 may start you making $200 monthly, possibly more. You get warranty deed, interest in well, participating interest in entire subdivision. Results count. Bank reference, established facts free. Write today. Make no delay. Invest where it pays to win. Sourlake Texas Oil Co., 611 Demenil, St. Louis, Mo.

100,000 GERMAN MARKS ONLY $3.50; 1,000,000 Russian rubles only $1.50. Also currency of Poland, Austria. Bonds. Dealer's list free. George Grigoleit, 20 E. Jackson, Chicago.

INCH DISPLAY ADVERTISEMENT 161 MAGazines thrice $15. Year $50. Wood's Popular Service, Atlantic City.

MEDICAL

WE WANT MEN SUFFERING FROM ANY weakness, chronic, nervous, skin, kidney or bladder disease to write us for free advice. Interesting book; symptom blank and advice free, sealed. Dr. Ries Company, Suite 210 & 211, Baltimore Building, St. Paul, Minn.

EYES GRANULATED, INFLAMED OR weak. Guaranteed cure. Nobles Company, 461-L, Jefferson City, Mo.

DOGS

FOR SALE—OORANG AIREDALE TRAINED watch-dogs, automobile dogs, farm dogs, hunting dogs, companions and puppies. Catalog free. Oorang Kennels, Box 116, La Rue, Ohio.

FOR SALE

PRICES REDUCED—21 PIECE MANICURing sets, $3.00 each. J. B. Rings, Box 1641, Indianapolis, Ind.

ARTIFICIAL EYES $3. BOOKLET FREE. Denver Optic, 566 Barclay, Denver, Colo.

MISSOURI FARMS

FIVE DOLLARS DOWN, $5 MONTHLY BUYS 40 acres good fruit and poultry land near town, southern Missouri. Price $200. Box C1051, Kansas City, Missouri.

REAL ESTATE LOANS

6% MONEY. BANKERS RESERVE SYStem. 6% loans are made on city or farm property to buy, build, improve, or pay indebtedness. Bankers Reserve Deposit Company, Lathrop Building, Kansas City, Mo.

MISSOURI FARM LAND FOR SALE

FOR SALE—TRUCK FARMS IN ILLINOIS and Missouri. Easy terms. Box A198, Mt. Vernon, Ill.

MICHIGAN FARM LANDS FOR SALE

LANDSEEKERS! ATTENTION! OPPORtunity awaits you near thriving city in lower Michigan; 20, 40, 80 acre tracts; only $10 to $50 down; balance long time. Investigate. Write today for free booklet giving full information. Swigart Land Company, X1245 First Nat'l Bank Bldg., Chicago.

MOVING PICTURE BUSINESS

LARGE PROFITS DAILY MADE IN THE business. Openings everywhere. Small capital starts you. Complete outfit sold on installments. No experience needed. Our machines are used and endorsed by Government institutions. Catalog free. Atlas Moving Picture Company, Morton Building, Chicago.

ONLY $98.00 STARTS YOU IN THIS BUSIness with complete outfit. No experience needed. Openings everywhere for making fortunes. Monarch Theater Supply Co., 726 South Wabash Av., Chicago.

TRICKS—GAMES

MAGIC GOODS. BOOKS, CARDS, LODEstone tricks. Catalog free. B. I. Smith Co., Newark, Mo.

PATENT ATTORNEYS

INVENTORS DESIRING TO SECURE PATents should write for our guide book, "How to Get Your Patent." Send model or sketch and description for our opinion on its patentable nature. Randolph Co., Dept. 174, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS AND TRADE-MARKS

"PATENTS AND TRADE-MARKS," 64-page book free. Excellent references, 23 years' experience. Robb, Robb & Hill, 1401 Hanna Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio. 940 McLachlen Bldg., Washington, D. C.

STORIES WANTED

STORIES, POEMS, PLAYS, ETC., ARE wanted for publication. Submit MSS or write Literary Bureau, 500, Hannibal, Mo.

UNDERGROUND TREASURES

UNDERGROUND TREASURES—HOW AND where to find them; particulars for 2c. Model Co., Como Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

CIGARS

BUY YOUR CIGARS DIRECT. FIFTY LA Columnas prepaid $1.50. Agents wanted. Havana Smokehouse, Homeland, Georgia.

TOBACCO

TOBACCO—KY.'S BEST SMOKING TOBACco, no flavoring, just good 4 year old, aged in the wood; 3 lbs. for $1.00. Quality guaranteed. Buck-Horn Tobacco Co., Campbellsville, Ky.

HOMESPUN TOBACCO. 5 LBS. CHEWING $1.75; 10, $3.00. 5 lbs. smoking $1.25; 10, $2.00. Pipe and recipe free. Cooperative Farmers, Paducah, Ky.

PERSONAL

MEN ON THE DOWN GRADE SUFFERING from chronic, nervous, blood, skin, kidney or bladder diseases, remember: we have been treating these diseases for over a quarter of a century. Established in 1896. Write; book, symptom blank and advice free. Hinze Medical Institute, 22 Washington Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn.

MEN— OUR TREATMENT NEVER FAILS to restore strength to those troubled with nervous, weak, run-down and despondent conditions that undermine good health. Costs nothing if not cured. Write for free book. Cumberland Chemical Co., 32 Berry Block, Nashville, Tenn.

THE TRUTH ABOUT WEAK, RUNDOWN, nervous men and women. The glands and the relation they bear to health and happiness. Book of valuable sex knowledge free. Write Standard Pharmacal Corporation, Dept. B, Box 603, Memphis, Tenn.

MARRY. THOUSANDS CONGENIAL PEOple, worth from $1,000 to $50,000 seeking early marriage; descriptions, photos, introductions free. Sealed. Either sex. Send no money. Address Standard Cor. Club, Grayslake, Ill.

MANY CULTURED AND REFINED MEN and women desire to correspond. Object matrimony. If interested, send 10c for information of value. Chicago Matrimonial Bureau, 517, 105 N. Dearborn St., Chicago.

MARRY. HUNDREDS WEALTHY. LARGest, best, most reliable club. Quickest results; write, be convinced. Confidential, descriptions free. Mrs. Budd, Box 753, San Francisco, Calif.

PERSONAL—(Continued)

LONESOME — WORLD'S GREATEST CLUB for lonesome people, largest, best; established many years. Thousands attractive, congenial, wealthy members everywhere, worth $4,000 to $400,000 willing to marry. Honorable, sincere people write. I will send you free, hundreds complete descriptions for your approval. One may be your "ideal." Am making many happy. Quick results guaranteed, try me. Old Reliable Successful Club, Hon. Ralph Hyde, 80-A, San Francisco.

HAPPY MARRIAGE; CONFIDENTIAL DEscriptions free in plain sealed envelopes; many wealthy; reliable; established 19 yrs. Bank references. Mrs. Wrubel, Box 26, Oakland, Cal.

SORE LEGS WILL HEAL UNDER ANTIFlamme Poultice Plaster. Describe case and get free sample. Bayles Distributing Co., 1856 Grand Ave., Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY — MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and descriptions free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 28, Kansas City, Mo.

AMERICAN SCANDINAVIAN CORREspondence. Information. English or Scandinavian language. Stamp. Peter Hanson, Box 1005, Chicago, Ill.

SIXTH AND SEVENTH BOOK OF MOSES, Egyptian secrets. Black art, other rare books. Catalogue free. Star Book Co., 28B4, Camden, N. J.

MARRY IF LONELY; "HOME MAKER"; hundreds rich; confidential; reliable; years experience; descriptions free. "The Successful Club," Box 556, Oakland, California.

MARRY HEALTH, WEALTH—MEMBERS everywhere, worth to $50,000. Photos, descriptions, free. Sunflower Club, B-300, Cimarron, Kans.

MARRY—FREE PHOTOGRAPHS. DIRECtory and descriptions of wealthy members. Pay when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 31, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY HAPPILY, PRIVATE, PERSONAL service rendered. Write, Pratt Syndicate, Box 1648, Washington, D. C.

YOUR HOROSCOPE WITH PICTORIAL chart showing character, talents, occupation, life partner, etc. Send 10c, birthdate. St. Germain Society, Dept. 112, Sharpsburg, Pa.

LEARN CRYSTAL GAZING. MYSTIFY YOUR friends. Make easy money. Complete instructions 30 cents. Box 55, 116 Street Station, New York.

MARRY! FREE DIRECTORY WITH DEscriptions and photos. Bonafide Co., Dept. 5, Kansas City, Mo.

BRITISH GIRLS DESIRE AMERICAN CORrespondents. Proposition 10c. Clare, 16, Cambridge street, London, S. W., England.

MAKE NEW FRIENDS. WRITE BETTY Lee, Inc., 4254 Broadway, New York City. Stamp appreciated.

GET MARRIED—BEST MATRIMONIAL PAper published. Free for stamp. Correspondent, Toledo, Ohio.

YOUNG MAN. WORTH SEVERAL THOUsand, will marry for love. Ladies write. Box 701, South Euclid, Ohio.

HANDSOME LADY OF MEANS; WOULD marry if suited. (Stamp.) Violet, Box 787, Dennison, Ohio.

LADIES, IF YOU WISH A WEALTHY, pretty husband, write me. Box 894, Station H, Cleveland, Ohio.

"BEAUTIFUL PEGGY" BARRETTE OR brooch. Latest novelty. 50c postpaid. [illegible] Horn, East Chestnut, Lancaster, Pa.

WIDOW, 40, OWNING LARGE RANCH, will marry. S-Box 35, League, Toledo, Ohio.

WEALTH, WITH CHARMING YOUNG widow, aged 22. League, Box 77, Oxford, Fla.

YOUNG AND PRETTY GIRL WORTH $65,000 will marry. Club, B-1022, Wichita, Kansas.

OCCULT BOOKS, ORIENTAL MERCHANdise; catalogue 10c. Hindu Publishers, 907 Buena Ave., Chicago.

CATHOLICS, WISHING TO MARRY, BOOKlet free. Address Home Club, L-Box 23, Grand Rapids, Mich.

PRETTY GIRLIE, WEALTHY, BUT OH, SO lonesome. C., Box 55, Oxford, Fla.

MISSING PERSONS

A department devoted to aiding readers of the Blade and Ledger in finding lost persons.

In sending information to the Missing Persons Department for publication in the Blade and Ledger, please write the information in the following order:

1, your name; 2, your address; 3, relation, if any, to lost person; 4, lost person's name; 5, age; 6, where last heard from; 7, when last heard from; 8, occupation, if any; 9, description.

Our rate for inserting notice will be $1 for 35 words and 10c for every additional word in excess of 35. To reproduce a photograph there will be an extra charge of $1.

Address Lost Persons Editor, W. D. Boyce Co., 500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

Candis Green, Box 410, S. Lincoln ave., Lakeland, Fla., wishes to hear from or concerning brother, Henry Fed. Last heard from in Port St. Joe, Fla., in 1916. At that time was in the turpentine manufacturing business. Mr. Green will appreciate any information regarding the present address of his lost brother.

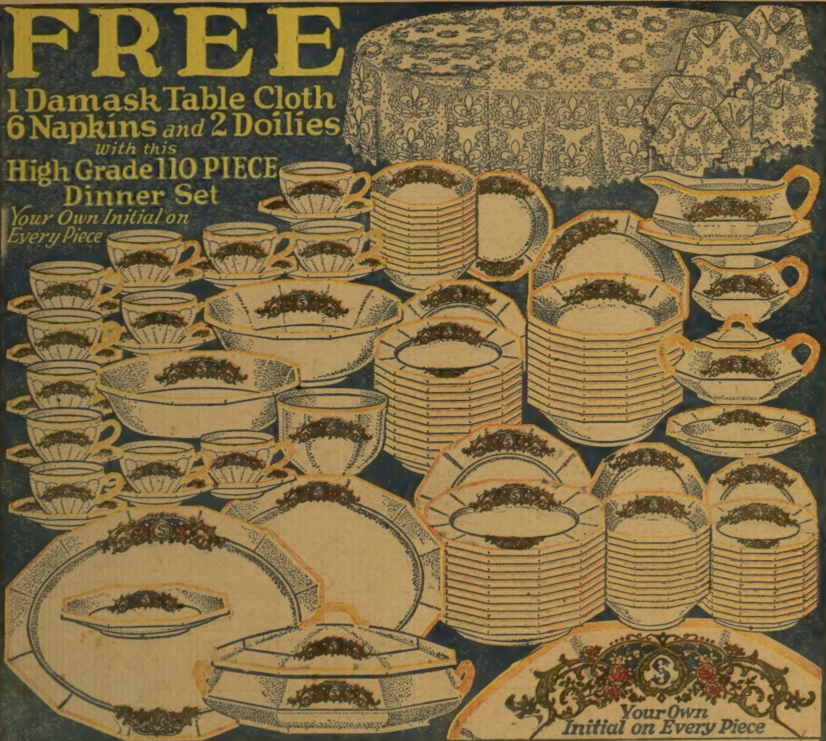
FREE

1 Damask Table Cloth 6 Napkins and 2 Doilies

with this

High Grade 110 PIECE Dinner Set

Your Own Initial on Every Piece



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$1 With Order

There are big days, and happy days when your family and your friends sit down to your fine big dinners. Picture your pleasure in having for such occasions a Dinner Set like this; pure, gleaming, flawless white, edged with a smooth, bright, shining gold line, gold handles, and a dainty lower band of colorful orange. Then think of the added satisfaction of this distinctive feature: ***Your Own Initial on Each and Every Piece.*** Each initial set in an artistic wreath which is banked by a charming scroll of roses in beautiful colors. This illustration does not begin to do it justice.

Martha Washington Colonial Shape Initial Dinner Set

110 Pieces

No picture, no description can do justice to this exceedingly beautiful dinner set. I want you to see it on your own table. I want you to know the Attractiveness of its Aristocratic Martha Washington Colonial Shape, the Beauty of its Gold Border. I want you to see with your own eyes how the big, wide, gorgeously brilliant gold handles enliven, enrich and beautify the set. Then I want you to know the Pride of Possessing a big, fine, high-class dinner set that has your initial on each and every piece. So, I will gladly send you the entire set, 110 Pieces, *on 30 days' Free Trial.* The picture above shows, in reduced size, the attractive initial design. This design is in 7 harmoniously blended colors and gold.

SUPREME QUALITY. Only the very best materials are used in the manufacture of these dishes. Extreme care is taken in all of the different operations. Everything that high class materials, manufacturing skill, art and design can do, has been done to make this beautiful Dinnerware a Remarkable Bargain. All of the decorations; the initial, the wreath, the scroll of roses in natural colors, the gold edge, and the inner line of orange, are absolutely put on to stay. We guarantee against breakage in shipment. **Each piece is wrapped separately in tissue paper.**

Special 30th Anniversary

SALE PRICE ONLY $29.95

Easy Monthly Payments

This dinner set formerly sold for $44.75 and without the Free Table Cloth, Napkins and Doilies. You would have been satisfied to pay this price for the High Quality and Exquisite Design alone. **To these points of excellence I have added these additional attractive features: The exclusiveness of your own initial on every piece; the glorious, cheerful, lavish beauty of Seven colors and Gold in the decorations; the outstanding and distinctively handsome big, wide, bright, gold handles. I have also added a daintily colored floral spray which is opposite the initial design on each and every piece.** I want to send you the complete set, 110 pieces, on 30 Days' Free Trial. I want you to use the dinnerware as if it were your own. If your satisfaction is not complete, return the set. I will refund your first payment and all freight charges. The trial will not cost you a penny.

30 Days' Free Trial

Be careful to state the initial you desire. Order No. RA2920. Terms: $1.00 with order, $2.50 Monthly. Price, $29.95.

Nathaniel Spear
President

"I Will Trust You Gladly" → **Spear & Co.** ← **Dept. C-2 Pittsburgh, Pa.**

Spear
Of Pittsburgh

HOME FURNISHERS FOR THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA

THE 110 PIECES 12 9¼-in. Dinner Plates, 12 7¼-in. Pie or Lunch Plates, 12 6¼-in. Bread and Butter Plates, 12 7¾-in. Soup Plates, 12 Cups, 12 Saucers, 12 5½-in. Dessert Dishes, 12 6-in. Oatmeal Dishes, 1 10½-in. Meat Platter, 1 13½-in. Meat Platter, 1 Sauce Boat, 1 Sauce Boat Stand, 1 Gravy Bowl, 1 Cream Pitcher, 1 6-in. Pickle Dish, 1 7-in. Butter Dish, 1 Covered Sugar Bowl (2 Pieces), 1 Covered Vegetable Dish (2 Pieces), 1 8-in. Open Vegetable Dish, 1 9¼-in. Round Salad Dish.

FREE Table Cloth, Napkins and Doilies

If you will send your order QUICKLY, I will send you Absolutely Free Table Cloth, 6 Napkins, 2 Doilies, all nicely scalloped. These articles are made of High Class Full Bleached Satin Finish Cotton Damask. The design is most attractive and the wearing quality of a kind that will thoroughly satisfy.

The table cloth is round, beautifully scalloped, and finished with a mercerized corded edge of dainty beauty. The table cloth is bigger, and of a better quality than is usually found in similar sets; it measures 56 inches in diameter and is a very practical size. The napkins are scalloped and corded to match the table cloth and are also larger than usual; they measure 17½ x 17½ inches. The 2 round doilies match the table cloth and napkins and are 13 inches in diameter.

Get My Big Free Book

THIS BARGAIN PRICE BOOK FREE
Spear
SEND FOR IT

Everything I sell is sent on 30 Days' Free Trial, and on the Easiest of Monthly payments. Yet my prices are much lower than spot cash prices in your home stores. If you want to know all about the fairest, squarest and easiest way to get the things you have long yearned for, send for my Free Catalog Now today. It shows Thousands of Bargains in **Furniture, Bedding, Springs, Mattresses, Bed Spreads, Rugs, Carpets, Linoleum, Lace Curtains, Portieres, Dishes, Baby Carriages, Glassware, Stoves, Ranges, Lamps, Enamel Cooking Sets, Aluminum Ware, Refrigerators, Washing Machines, Sewing Machines, Guns, Silverware, Clocks, Cameras, Talking Machines, Childrens' Automobiles, Wagons, etc., Bicycles, Table Linen, etc.**

SPEAR & CO., Dept. C-2 Pittsburgh, Pa.

Send me the 110-piece Initial Dinner Set and Free Table Cloth, 6 Napkins and 2 Doilies. I enclose $1.00 first payment. It is understood that if at the end of the 30 days' trial I am satisfied, I will send you $2.50 Monthly. Order No. RA2920. Terms: $1 with order, $2.50 Monthly. Price $29.95. Title remains with you until paid in full. Send me your Big Free Catalog also.

Print plainly in box the initial you desire ☐

Please print or write name and address plainly.

Name .... Occupation ....

R. F. D., Box No. or Street & No. ....

Post Office .... State ....

If your shipping point is different from your post office fill in line below

Send Shipment to ....

FREE CATALOG } If you want the Catalog Only, Send No Money, put an X here and write your name and address plainly on the above lines ☐